DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 063 054	RC 006 117

TITLE	The Memramcook Conference of North American Indian Young People (Memramcook, New Brunswick, July 1969).
INSTITUTION	Teaching and Research in Bicultural Education, Inc., Princeton, Maine.
SPONS AGENCY	National Endowment for the Humanities (NFAH), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	Jul 69
NOTE	163p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$6.58
DESCRIPTORS	*American Indians; *Biculturalism; *Bilingualism; Community Colleges; Cultural Context; Demonstration Programs; Educational Attitudes; *Educational Planning; Governmental Structure; History; Reservations (Indian); School Segregation; *Social Influences; Tribes

ABSTRACT

A meeting of over 100 American Indian and non-Indian young people and adults from the eastern United States and Canada is described in this publication. Significant events of the 6-day conference (keynote talks, discussions, question-and-answer sessions, etc.) are reported in order to show the evolution of ideas, changes in attitude and behavior, thoughts, feelings, and creative energy and determination of today's young Indian men and women. Discussion of the concept of an all-Indian school directed by Indians is emphasized, and plans for continuing study of such a project are reported as the major accomplishment of the conference. A summary of 30 preconference questionnaires on the feasibility of the all-Indian school and a summary of responses to the postconference evaluation sheet are included. (PS)

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THE MEMRAMCOOK CONFERENCE

of

NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN YOUNG PEOPLE

Memramcook, New Brunswick

July 1969

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EDUCATION & WELFARE
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TEACHING AND RESEARCH IN BICULTURAL EDUCATION
MALISEET - MICMAC - PASSAMAQUODDY - PENOBSCOT
MAINE - NEW BRUNSWICK - NOVA SCOTIA
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND - QUEBEC

Publication of these proceedings was financed by funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities, an agency of the U. S. Government.

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he Memramcook Conference of North American Indian Young People as supported by the William H. Donner Foundation, the Charles E. errill Trust, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland (Maine), he Union of New Brunswick Indians, the Indian-Eskimo Association f Canada ane AVCO-Economic Systems Corporation.

PREFACE

This report is not a normal conference report. It is not a verbatim recording of everything that was said at a conference. It is not a scientific paper on the problems of Indian education.

Rather, it is an attempt to describe a happening - a meeting of Indian young people and adults from the eastern United States and Canada, over a period of six days.

This meeting was important by itself. It is more important - and can be more important - in terms of what led up to it and in terms of what happens next.

We cannot predict what will happen next. We can describe what led up to the happening at Memremcook, New Brunswick, and attempt to give a feeling for what did take place.

What happens next depends on a lot of things. It depends on the students and adults that were at Memremcook. It depends on people who weren't there but who heard about the conference. It depends on people with money - Foundation directors, government officials, program administrators - from both sides of the international border. It depends on people with time and energy to invest in place of money. It depends on luck. It depends on you!

Here are some of the things that led up to the happening at Memremcook . . . . .

. . . . . a long-held Indian dream that Indians in the northeastern United States and Canada might have their own school. (There are some 10,000 to 12,000 Indians in Maine, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island with a common linguistic and cultural background).

. . . . . a conference of Indian high-school dropouts from New Brunswick, sponsored by the 1 1/2 year old Union of New Brunswick Indians, involving 21 students from 8 New Brunswick Indian Reserves. The idea of an all-Indian school was brought up by the students.

. . . . . an informal May 14th meeting in Houlton, Maine, between Governor John Stevens (Passamaquoddy) of the Indian Township Reservation, Maine, and Union Vice President Andrew Nicholas (Maliseet). The idea of an "all-Indian school" was discussed some more, as a way of reducing Indian dropouts.

. . . . . a June meeting at Memremcook Institute, New Brunswick, where the Union was holding a directors' meeting. (The directors of the Union are the 14 Band Chiefs of New Brunswick.) To this meeting came Governor Stevens and his counterpart, Governor Eugene Francis (Passamaquoddy) of the Pleasant Point Reservation, Maine. Here the concept of an all-Indian school directed by Indians - particularly those attending it - received positive reactions from all the Chiefs.

. . . . . a June 26th planning meeting in Fredricton, New Brunswick, involving Indian representatives from both countries and the Micmac, Maliseet and Passamaquoddy Tribes, resulting in definite plans for a 5-day conference - this despite the fact that no funds were available to support such a meeting. Indian students from both sides of the border comprised the majority membership of this informal conference planning committee.

So the dates - July 14-18 - and the place - Memremcook Institute, south of Moncton, New Brunswick - were set, and invitations sent out to the 35 Reserves or Reservations in the Maritime Provinces and Maine, promising to pay the expenses of two young delegates from each Band or Tribe (although no funds were yet on hand) with less than two weeks notice. With the invitations were sent questionnaires designed to stimulate thinking as well as collect information. (These are summarized in the Appendix.)

The response - more than 100 people, mostly young people, participated before the happening was over, though not all Reserves were able to be represented. This report attempts to describe the significant events of the week-long happening - key-note talks, discussions, questions-and-answers, the evolution of ideas, changes in attitude and behavior, thoughts, feelings, and above all, the creative energy and determination shown by today's young Indian men and women. Energy to solve their own problems; determination not to be down.

THE FIRST DAY

The Memremcook happening officially started Monday morning, July 14th . Andrew Nicholas (Maliseet), one of the Union of New Brunswick Indians' two Vice Presidents, made the opening remarks:

> **"I'm very glad to see everybody here. For a while we thought, in such a short notice, in the short period of time we had, that we'd have limited attendance, but we've had a very good response from the young people and from the non-Indian people who have been asked to participate. The sessions here this week are being sponsored by the Union of New Brunswick Indians and I would like to pass the regrets on to you from the President, Harold Sappier, from St. Mary's Reserve, who was unable to attend the opening sessions of this seminar. I also want to take this opportunity to thank the resource people who were asked to come here and give us help, Indians and non-Indians, and also the group leaders who will be asked to work hard this week."**
>
> **"Now I'm sure that many of you are asking yourselves why this conference, why this get-together. The whole thing is centered around school, and here I should perhaps clarify one thing. I hate the label "Indian school," just like "Indian doctor" or "Indian nurse" or "Indian agent." I think what we're talking about is a school, and what we're asking ourselves here is what do you people - the young people - see in such a school if you were going to be there. Perhaps the whole week is centered around this idea - a non-graded school, no grade 9, no grade 10 - nothing but you as an Indian person having a certain potential being exposed to an education which is meaningful to you."**

"I think one of the other aspects which is being shown here this week is the realization by the Indian people that education is important. Not too many people agree with this. Some people feel that Indians don't think that education is important, but they do, or else such get-togethers as this wouldn't be taking place. I think they're examining education to make it meaningful to the Indian people. And whether you're a person from Maine, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick - wherever you're from, the conditions that you have as a native person, these elements, have a common denominator. The attitudes to you from the governments, and so forth. Personally, I'm getting very disgusted and very frustrated because every time that the Indian people approach the authorities in the Departments of Education (and this means Federal, Provincial or State) the reactions are totally negative and totally defensive. If we suggest something for Indian people, they think we're segregationists, racists, or the labels that they have, rather than seeing it as a positive concern of the Indian people to make education meaningful to the young people."

"This is the other aspect about this conference - it's for the young people. There are non-Indians here, but I don't want to see this conference dominated by Whites, and you and your groups - you'll have to make sure of this. Don't let any one person dominate us. The only thing is, I've gone to a lot of seminars and a lot of conferences - probably too many - but I've always heard this: "I don't get anything out of this conference." Well, one thing I've learned is that you get out of a conference, or you get out of a seminar, what you've put into it. What he puts into it, what she puts into it, what everybody puts into it, that's what you get out of a conference. So if a conference or a seminar fails, it's on everyone of us."

"That's all I have to say for my opening remarks. I wish you success in your group discussions. We have some very good people here that are participating and I'm sure that with your cooperation this seminar will have good food for thought for the school that we'll see in one year from now, I hope. If the response is there from young people, if the response comes from 1-15 or 20 people, then a year from today there will be such a school. Thank you very much."

Loretta Barlow (Micmac) had served as one of the original members of the informal planning committees which had first met on June 26th in Fredricton. She also addressed the opening session of the Memremcook happening:

> "Well, I guess Andy said just about everything there was to say, but I'll see what I can do. Before you came here you might have had small meetings on your various Reserves that could prepare you for this week-long session we'll be having here, what is expected of you, and previous to this meeting here there were other meetings where the adults took the spotlight."
>
> "In order to gain you over this idea, we had to call on you young people (including myself!) to hear your opinions and so forth. We people sitting up here is like we're the planning committee, but it doesn't mean that we're any different from you people sitting out there. It's just that some one had to plan the meeting a day ahead and usually it's the older people that plan these meetings. But as you may have noticed, some of us younger ones are taking an active part in the planning of our meetings. So that's why we young people are up here and we're going to help you in everything that's going to happen I guess."
>
> "Sitting amongst you there are very good resource people who will make speeches and so on. They are here for our benefit, so let's all listen carefully to what they have to say, and if there are any questions to be asked, don't hesitate to ask them. Like I said before this meeting, it will be what we make it so ask any questions that come into your minds and we just may get somewhere. Because you see a lot of people you may be afraid to speak out. Well, I'm nervous too, but you know we've got to get somewhere, so try the best you can. I thank you very much for coming."

Other members of the informal conference planning committee had been Anthony Francis (Micmac), the Union's other Vice President, serving as chairman; Sarah Solomon (Maliseet), Veronica Atwin (Maliseet), Gailen Paul (Maliseet), Sharon Perley (Maliseet), Andrew Nicholas, William Paul (Maliseet), Loretta Barlow (Micmac), Donna Augustine (Micmac), John Stevens, Eugene Francis, and Greg Buessing (non-Indian). The committee's firmest intention was that, during the conference, it would restructure events to fit the needs and demands of the conference participants. To accomplish this degree of flexibility, the planning committee had decided to meet every night during the conference. It did so, and the conference's structure changed from day-to-day, as will be seen. One interesting observation was made as the conference progressed, the responsibility for making decisions came to rest more and more with all the young people at the conference, meeting in "total group" sessions. The role of the planning committee, as such, came to be more and more the implementation of the young people's decisions.

Mr. Ray Fadden, curator of the Six Nations Museum, located in Onchiota, New York, was the first resource person to speak on the first day of the Conference. Mr. Fadden came to the Memremcook Conference with a rich background in the culture of Indians. For those who have heard Mr. Fadden before, they knew that his talk would set a new and bright faith in the pride and worth of being an Indian. So often an Indian is made ashamed for being what he is. Ray Fadden's words have the power to set Indians free from these imposed chains and make them feel like men and women worthy of great respect. Here is a sampling of his very interesting and inspiring talk at Memremcook.

I've come a long ways. I've got one meeting here and I found out there are 2 or 3 going on at different places. They asked if I would speak and tell about what I told the last time at Tobique, this last year. I'm also a school teacher and I have taught in Indian schools and I firmly believe that our education, especially Indian children and not only Indian children but white children, they should be taught Indian culture too. I've seen some very sad things because Indians didn't know their own history. In our Indian schools in St. Regis Reserve, while I was there, I taught our young people their own histories and if I couldn't do it in school we would do it outside of school because we thought that it was important. Those young people who were under my care at that time -- many of them are our leaders today, because they know their own history and they are Indians and they are proud they are Indians. We had a different way we taught our youngsters. We used, in some cases, these beaded record belts. There's no reason why you can't make these things up for your own history. There are Indian chaps who know Indian history and could help you. I'll see if I could do a little research. If I was with you people for a year, you would have these things on your own history. . .

Now I'm going to tell you what I tell white people and Indian people who come to visit our Indian museum in the Adirondack Mountains. I feel myself, strongly, that white people should know true Indian history. It's just as important that they know it as that Indian people know it. In the United States they are having courses in the universities, and colleges, on Indian history. White people want Indian history and it seems rather strange that our Indians should be denied something that white people have in their schools today. There are courses all over being started on Indian history, real Indian history.

. . . .

Most people think that all Indians wear those big feathered head-dresses, like that young man has back there, because you see it's so much in T.V. programs, moving picture shows, kid comic magazines, and even history books. The funny thing is none of our Eastern Indians in the old days ever wore head-dresses like that. That's just as foreign to our Indians around here as it is to white people. Way out west, down in the Great Plains, 2000 miles away, those Indians who lived way out there won feathers and they had to win them by deeds of bravery and deeds of courage. If they won enough they could make them into a head-dress, tie it on their horse's tail, or wear it any way they wish. But not unless they had the right to, not any more than a general can wear a medal unless he earns that right, and because a man had a big head-dress that didn't necessarily mean that he was a chief any more than a boy scout with a sash of merit badges means that he's a scout master. It simply meant he won them and he could wear them and during ceremonial time, which was the only time they ever wear them anyhow, any other Indian could tell by looking at a man's head-gear what kind of a man he was. As a matter of fact, among the Western Indians, the symbol of a chief was one eagle feather upright on the back of his head. Nowadays, all Indians, whether they're from North, South, East or West, whenever they're putting on programs in front of white folks, you'll always see them wear that big feathered head-dress. And the only reason they do is because the white man expects it of them.

. . . .

In my museum in New York is the longest piece of beadwork in the world. It's 75 feet long. That tells the story of a great peace prophet, a holy man, a sacred man called Deganawidah. This continent America has never produced one greater than Deganawidah any time before or after the white man came to America. He was a man of peace, a man of vision. He founded the first United Nations in the world, the Iroquois Confederacy. It was organized to do away with war and create ever-lasting peace among mankind. He was like a holy person, maybe like Christ, maybe like Mohammed. He was sacred and he had a brilliant brain. Deganawidah said, "We formed our governments. We will plant a tree of the great peace." He compared the Iroquois government to a giant tree, meaning that it wasn't just hidden away for the five nations and no one else, it was high up like a tree. The whole world could see it, could go toward it, could become part of it, go to raise its trunk. At the top of that tree was the Eagle, guarding the Iroquois' freedom. That tree had four roots and they went to the four corners of the Indian world and by that Deganawidah meant that anybody, it made no difference who they were -- they didn't have to be Iroquois, they didn't necessarily have to be Indians -- could come under the tree of peace. Both the French and English were approached by the Iroquois; both were asked to come under the tree of peace and settle their difficulties by council rather than by force and blood, but it was beyond the understanding of the white man of that time. They had always settled things by force and blood across the ocean. Only recently, in your United Nations, have white men been thinking in the terms of peace. Anyone who wished to take shelter beneath that great tree were welcome. They could sit beneath the tree, providing they buried their weapons of blood beneath the tree, smoke the pipe of friendship, try to settle their problems and difficulties by council, by peaceful methods, by talking it over, by reason rather than by force and blood. Many nations took shelter beneath that great tree. Not just 5 or 6 nations as you read in you history book. We have records of over 32 Indian nations who took shelter beneath the tree of peace of the Iroquois Confederacy. Most of them eventually became Iroquois citizens. But what's important to people living in this country, United States of America and Canada, for over 100 years the 13 colonies took shelter beneath that great tree and were protected by that Iroquois Confederacy. There's plenty of evidence, plenty of it, in the documentary records of the colonies. Especially in the documentary history of New York state, Pennsylvania, the New England states, Maryland, Virginia, etc., that points out the fact that if it was not for the

Iroquois protection long ago there very likely would be no United States of America today or Canada either as we know it.

And historians are now beginning to admit what they must have known a long time ago, that the government of the United States of America is patterned not after any government that came from across the ocean. In the first place, they didn't have a government like U.S. across the ocean in those days. In the second place, they didn't have a democracy across the ocean at that time. They believed in the divine, absolute rights of kings and queens, all over Europe. The government of the United States of America came right from this land. The land of the free, home of the brave -- a government of, by, and for the people of the government.

Now I have a diagram of the government and I'm going to explain it to you a little bit. If you understand how it operates, you can very easily see where the U.S. got their idea of government. There's no government like this today across the ocean. Each one of these things the white man calls a tribe, was actually a state, and those who sat in the council house they call Chief. They weren't like kings and queens and dukes and barons and what have you -- the noble system of Europe, whose oldest son over there in Europe automatically became king, baron, or duke when his father died. Regardless of what the European people wished, they had no rights at all; rulers inherited the right to rule. Those Indian chiefs would be what we call representatives; they were very much like senators. They simply represented their clan; in other words, they represented their people, were put in office by their people, to represent them in their government. That was unknown in Europe at that time. It's true that the ancient Greeks had a similar democracy, but it was not a true democracy if you study it, because 9 out of 10 of the Greeks were slaves with no voice in governments. Among the Iroquois, all slavery was outlawed in their territories and everybody had a voice, men and women both. Even a 13-year-old kid and up had a voice at the age of reason. Furthermore, if those chiefs didn't do as their people wished them to do, they were removed from office after the third warning and replaced by chiefs who would, which was also unknown in Europe at that time. In Europe, the king ruled and that was it! And once those chiefs were removed from office they could never hold office as long as they lived.

The Iroquois had regular state governments whereby they controlled their own internal state affairs. They had a central federal government at the capital, Onadoga, where they have two Houses. A bill, in order to become a law, had to go through those two Houses. The 13 original states operated under a similar system directly after the American Revolution in the first dozen years of their existence. The original states, however, were so much divided among themselves they could never pass a bill the way the Iroquois did, unanimously. Every state had to say "Yes" in order for it to become a law. There were too many of them. They had to change it to majority rule, the way it is today. But when white people in this country today go in their council houses to pick out their leaders, their chiefs, their presidents, their representatives, they are not following any customs that came from the land of kings and queens from across the ocean, don't let them kid you. They're following an American Indian custom. When their women vote they certainly are following Iroquois customs, because white folks across the ocean until just recently gave their women absolutely no rights whatsoever, let alone voting. As sad as it may seem they were counted right along with chattel -- that's a fact. England gave women a voice before World War I; United States just after World War I; Spain gave them the right to vote 8 years ago; Switzerland and several other European countries to this date have not given women the right to vote. But the Iroquois did, many years ago.

White people are always telling us that representative democracy was invented in Europe, that is if their ancestors came from England. Now that seems a rather odd statement to make -- we had a revolutionary war with England over representation. They're always holding up to us the Magna Carta of England as the great beginning of freedom and democracy in the world. They lie so much about Indians in history books that I question anything in history books. I studied the Magna Carta of England, I was curious; I was surprised, yet I wasn't surprised. The people aren't even mentioned in it, not once. . . When England got democracy, she was directly influenced by the French Revolution. She had to give the people a voice. The nobles would have lost their heads and they knew it. And the French in turn were influenced by the American Revolution and the Americans by the Indians.

A very famous lawyer, Felix Cohen, who worked in the Interior Department of Washington for a number of years, stood right on the floor of my museum and showed me a photostat copy of a report given by three British agents who were sent over here to America just before the Revolutionary War to find out why the colonies were so rebellious against their mother country. It was their report to their superiors back home, and believe me, it was interesting reading. It was worded something like this:

> "This average Indian in the Americas are peculiar people with strange customs and ways very different from ours in Europe. The people actually elect their won leaders and if the leaders do not abide by the will of the people, they are removed from office. This is a serious and a dangerous thing. This is contagious. Our American colonies are now demanding a voice in the government. Something has got to be done about this immediately."

I feel that in our museum our most important thing -- far more important than all the feathers, skins, and drums -- is what we call the Indian contribution chart. It's a large chart about 10 feet by 4, which hangs in our museum. Under that chart there's a little missionary article tacked to the wall, and it says on that little article this: "The Indian's old world is disappearing whether he likes it or not; he must make the change to the white man's civilization." I'm going to answer that because I feel it should be answered. Listen people and listen good, everybody's old world is disappearing. I doubt if anybody in the whole world lives as their ancestors did 200 years ago and that includes the white folks. The white man in this country doesn't hunt with a flintlock gun because George Washington did. He doesn't split rails with an old-fashioned axe because Abraham Lincoln did. I haven't seen any stage coaches or covered wagons or pony express go down the road this morning, have you? The white man isn't living as his ancestors did 200 years ago any more than the Indians or any other people are.

Now, as for the next part of that statement, ". . . must make the change to the white man's civilization," that's taking an awful lot of credit, because our present day civilization, and all of the things in it, is not a gift of one race of people, the white man of Europe. Listen -- the white man in Europe did not invent reading, writing and arithmetic. Those three very important, very necessary things were invented by a very dark skinned people in Africa, spread north to Rome and Greece, and then on to what is known as white Europe. No people -- I don't care who they are, or where they come from -- can say to any other people -- and I mean just that, any other people, black people, white people, red people, yellow people -- they cannot say, "This is my civilization. Everything we have here is a gift of me, of my folks." If they say that, they are not telling the truth and if they believe it, they've got to be the biggest hypocrites in the world. Every race, without any exceptions, has given to this civilization we call ours today. The black man has contributed, don't think he hasn't. He has made magnificent contributions in spite of the uphill fight he had to take because of his black skin. Did you know that some archeological evidence indicates that he may have been the first people to make iron? That coffee that you had this morning was a gift of those people of the black race. I don't know about you, but I can't get along without it myself! The yellow race has made great contributions to this civilization; their culture is ancient. The white man has made wonderful contributions and so has the red man of America, the Indian. Nobody has the right to say, "This is my civilization." Everybody can say, "This is our civilization." It's like a big kettle of stew. It doesn't just have onions in that stew to make it taste good. There are many, many things in that stew, gifts of every race in the world, to make it what it is -- our present day civilization. This civilization belongs to the world. Everybody has contributed to it. It's not a one-man civilization; all have a right to it.

When I was a little boy going to school, they taught very little about Indians at school where I went, just like they teach very little about Indians at school today. But they always told us this. They said the American Indian gave corn to the world, and as rule that was it. As if that's the only thing the Indian ever gave. Well, not only did the American Indian give corn to the world, do you know how many kinds of corn they gave altogether? This is going to surprise you. Most people don't realize there are this many kinds of corn. Altogether they gave over 600 kinds of corn, not 6 or 7 but 600. Even this so-called hybrid corn the white people boast to have just discovered the last few years was known to our Indians in Mexico 2,000 years ago. All of our beans, every type of beans we have today except two, came from the American Indians, and those two kinds of beans came from China. The Iroquois Indians alone had over 16 variations of beans. Even that famous dish you hear so much about -- Boston baked beans -- was a Wampanoag Indian dish taught to the Pilgrims by the Wampanoag Indians. That was the first time white folks enjoyed several other dishes that we enjoy today -- clam chowder, oyster stew, pumpkin pie, (believe-it-or-not) cranberry sauce, corn soup, popcorn; all of our corn, beans, pumpkin, squash, celery, buckwheat, maple sugar, maple syrup, vanilla, chocolate, peppers, tapioca, Irish potatoes -- that's right, it didn't come from Ireland as everyone thinks. It saved the Irish people; yes, it saved the people of the world. It was a gift of the American Indians. That nation of Indians that developed the Irish potato and gave it to the world -- do you know how many kinds they had? They had over 75 different varieties of Irish potatoes. Sweet potatoes is another gift of the American Indian to the world. You young people ought to be interested -- even peanuts, popcorn and chewing gum came from the American Indians, that's right. Pineapple didn't come from Hawaii. Pineapple came from our central American Indians and was brought over to Hawaii. Tapioca didn't come from Africa, it came from our South American Indians and was brought over to Africa. As a matter of fact, according to agricultural scientists, American Indian food plants show a further development from the wild types than do the food plants of Asia, Africa or Europe.

According to the Museum of Arts and Science in Rochester, New York, one nation of Indians, the Inca Indians of Peru, originated, developed and gave to the world more agriculture food plants now in use today than all the Europeans put together! Think of it -- French, Irish, Scotch, Germans, Russians, Polish, Italians, and all the rest combined did not give as much to the world as that one Indian nation did. Over 80 food plants, mind you. Over 80 that I know of have been a gift of the Inca Indian nation. That's a wonderful contribution! In the whole world, I think there's only 120 domesticated food plants and they gave 80. That means they gave more agricultural food plants to the world than all the rest of the world put together. Some agricultural experts say that as high as 3/4 of the staple agriculture crops we grow in this country were gifts of the American Indians. They were unknown to the world before Indians gave them to the world, and they were not growing wild out in the forest, by any means. They had actually been developed by Indian farmers on Indian farms.

Agricultural food plants, by the way, weren't the only things the Indians gave the world. You people would have had a hard time getting here, many of you, if it hadn't been for one gift of the Indians -- that's rubber. The first time white people ever saw rubber they saw Indians playing a game very similar to basketball, and when that ball bounced toward them, you know what they did? They turned and ran away from it; they thought it was alive! That's the first time white people ever saw rubber! And those Indians weren't just playing a game; they had practical uses for rubber; they were wearing waterproof clothing; they had rubber boots on. What would the Europeans have done without Indian medicine? We might not have built the Panama Canal or won the last war. Quinine is one of many, many medicines we use today that were gifts of the American Indians. Believe it or not, Iodine is an American Indian medicine. In the 400 years that the white man has dominated these two continents, they have not discovered one, not even one, medicine plant that wasn't known by Indians. Even those shirts you fellows have one, those blouses you girls have on -- they probably contain cotton. If they do, it's American Indian cotton with a foreign name, Egyptian, attached to it. There's 35 or 40 American Indian gifts to the world with European or foreign names attached to them, to make them acceptable to white people, I guess. Like Egyptian cotton or Irish potato, India rubber, Turkish coffee beans, or turkey itself. These things didn't come from over there, they came from this country and they were gifts of the Indians. It is true the Egyptians have cotton, a very short fiber cotton. I doubt very much if it's grown commercially any place today. No cotton in the world has longer or finer fibers than the kind the American Indian developed and gave the world. White people, when they first saw cloth made from it, you know what they thought it was? They though it was silk, it was that fine. Today it's not only grown in America, it's grown all over the world. Did you ever see a lacrosse game? It's played all over the country. It's a North American Indian game. Did you ever see a hockey game? Hockey comes from the Indians of Argentina. Did you ever play marbles? You're playing a form of an Indian game. Did you ever go down hill in a tobaggan? That's an Indian invention. Did you ever sleep in a sleeping bag? That's an Indian invention.

Did you ever sit in a hammock? That's an Indian invention. Did you ever go canoeing, or snow shoeing? Northern Indians and Eskimos were the first people to make Indian snow shoes. South American Indians were the first people to make a toothbrush. Peruvian Indians were the first people to fill cavities in teeth with gold.

I've only mentioned a few, and I mean a few, of the many gifts from the American Indians to the world. But I say right here, and I wouldn't hesitate any day to bet my life on it, that white people in this country -- whether they realize it or not -- are actually living more the way the Indians lived at the time of Columbus -- entertaining themselves the way the Indians did, eating food that Indians ate at the time of Columbus, thinking and governing themselves the way the Indians did at that time -- than the Indian is living the way the white man did at the time of Columbus. If you ever took away the many gifts of the American Indians to the world, believe me, this civilization we have today would crumble and that's why I get mad at such unfair and misleading thoughts and statements as that missionary article text on the wall under that contribution chart. "The Indian's old world is disappearing whether he likes it or not; he must make the change to the white man's civilization." Such a statement as that, especially in this day and age with all the people of the world in contact with each other, is not only ridiculous but downright stupid. And it isn't true nor is it fair. This civilization we have today is made up of the gifts of every race in the world -- don't you ever forget it! American Indians had a great deal to do with shaping it up.

I would like to add a little bit more. There's a certain missionary priest in South Dakota, named Father Edward. He has a missionary school and he's a great friend of the Indians and the first thing he teaches in his school is Indian culture and history, and he teaches his kids to be proud they're Indians, with the results that they're not growing up to be a race of drunks. They're holding their heads up and they're proud; they won't do anything to shame their own people and he's doing a good job. I'm not too keen on priests too much myself, but I like this guy. He's a regular man and a good man. I think he's done a lot of good. He has studied and he can prove by the record that the average height of the European at the time of Columbus was 5 feet, and one out of 10 Europeans of those days -- due to insufficient diet and lack of proper nutrients -- one out of ten was deformed in some way -- hunch back, lame, blind or cripple, insane. He says that thanks to our Indians, America has given the world food plants, medicine, ideas of sanitation and health, so people today are as healthy and strong as they are. He says that it would be difficult for an eighth grade student in this country now to squeeze into a suit of armor of a man who was considered a big man at the time of King Arthur. He says, in fact, it was the American Indian who put the white man on the map. But they never teach real Indian history or culture. They only teach of Indians as people always living in the woods, dressed in skins or going around naked. They leave out so much. For example, you've heard of the great Appian Way of Rome -- it is as wide as a little lane here, and only 100 miles long, I understand. Our Inca Indians of Peru built four-lane highways; some of them are 2,000 years old and still in use. They tunneled through mountains, they built suspension bridges over deep gorges. One of their roads, if it was stretched out, would reach from New York to Los Angeles. Yet there's not one mention of it in our textbooks. They talk about the pyramids of Egypt -- I think there's three of them. Our Mexican Indians built literally hundreds of them. The Indians of Yucatan, for instance, knew that the world was round, that it revolves in a planetary system with the sun in the center. They could predict eclipses before the Europeans could. They invented the zero thousands of years before it was independently invented by the Arabs. They knew every method of mathematics we have today, including calculus. They were Indians -- Indian people!

. . . . . .

I'm one-hundred per cent for Indians learning their own culture and history, and it doesn't mean you're trying to go back to the days of feathers and skins. That's a ridiculous argument; who said anything about going back to the feather days? It is ridiculous! I studied about Jesus Christ; does that mean I have to wear a sheet like he was wearing or one of those beards? I studied about King Arthur; do I have to wear a suit of armor? You study about several men of the past, not because you want to dress the way they did, it's impossible today, but because these men have noble ideas and good characteristics that you young people want to imitate. So it is with Indian people -- absolutely everybody should know their own people's history! They should know other history, too. Your reading, writing and arithmetic -- that's not necessarily just white man's. It belongs to the world. Everybody contributed to this civilization today.

It's important that white people learn more truth about Indians, too. A lot of white school kids visit our museum in New York, and they ask a lot of questions. You can tell by these questions that these little white children ask about our little Indian children, what kind of a job their teacher is doing with them as regards to Indians and their way of life. Many of the questions are intelligent questions and you know she's doing a very good job, but I'll be frank with you, many of the questions are ridiculous questions and some of them are even cruel questions and our Indian people, they often wonder just what is being taught about their people, not only their people who lived long ago, but their people who live today. You often get the idea, from their questions, that the youngsters are led to believe that our Indian people of today live as a white man three- or four-hundred years ago. Well, it was a wonderful life and there's not an Indian today that wouldn't rather live it any day than the crazy mixed-up world that we have to live in nowadays, and I imagine that if the truth was known, the white people would rather live it too, or they wouldn't be camping every time they get a chance, but it just isn't true, it's impossible today.

Our Indian people today live more or less just like any other people in this country. They live in houses like other people do, they dress the same way, they eat the same kinds of food, they have the same kind of amusements. Our Indian boys or girls aren't different from any other kid in America; they're no different than you people. They like chocolate bars and ice cream cones; they like to go to movie picture shows and watch T.V., and more than once, I've seen them tease their folks to sit up and watch the late show, and quite often I've heard their folks say, "You get to bed, you've got school tomorrow." They even quit school once in a while. I ought to know, I caught quite a few at different times, they caught me a couple of times too. Our Indians today don't ride around the forest on ponies or horseback, or run through the woods in moccasined feet -- they'd break their necks if they ever tried it! They might even get lost, even if they are Indians! They drive Fords and Chevrolets and some even have Cadillacs. I'm willing to bet, if you came up on our reservation today, unless somebody told you you were on a reservation, you couldn't tell it from any rural community, and if you came up to see an Indian dance, nine chances out of ten, it would be a square dance or a round dance and our young Indians can Jitterbug, Rock and Roll and do the Twist or any other of these crazy dances they have nowadays.

Look, if I didn't know any better and went across the ocean to visit England, I might expect to find English people dressed up in suits of armor, riding around on ponies or horseback, spearing each other. King Arthur was an Englishman, he dressed that way and did those things. I saw him on a T.V. program the other night, it must be true. If I went down to Italy, I might expect to find the Italians running around in togas the way their ancestor, Julius Ceasar, did, like I saw him in a movie picture show. I doubt that the Chinese still wear pigtails, they probably live just like any other people. That's the way the Indians are today. All Indians don't live on the reservations; there's nothing that says that an Indian has to stay on a reservation, if he wants to leave it. I don't think there's a large city in this country and in Canada that doesn't have an Indian organization in it that's made up of Indians that live and work there. White folks pass them every day on the street and don't recognize them as Indians, you know why? They haven't got a head dress on their heads or a sign on their back saying, "I'm an Indian". Now, some Indians prefer to live on their reservation, and you remember this. and you remember it good. They have every right in the world to live on their little reservation if they want to, believe me, they paid a very, very, very high price for this privilege. They paid a higher price than all the white men put together. Indians, just like other people, have whole towns where people live, where they have common interests, a common language, their own Indian religion, where the graves of their mothers and fathers lie buried beneath that earth, so that is what a reservation is to Indians. It's all they've got left of this beautiful country, and our chiefs would rather die any day than sell their reservations that contain the bones of their mothers and fathers, their grandfathers and grandmothers. As far as they are concerned, that's their country, and remember this also and remember it good. That reservation is no gift of Uncle Sam or Ottawa either, for that matter, that's all Uncle Sam hasn't taken away yet.

The most ridiculous question that was ever asked of our youngsters was this, and I still have the letter to prove it. "Why don't Indians grow feathers in their heads anymore?" Quite often that we get questions like this, quite often. "What's it like living in a wigwam or tipi?" "How does buffalo meat and bear meat taste?" and for some strange reason these two things must fascinate white people: scalping and burning at the stake, because quite frequently we get these questions: "Why do Indians scalp people? Why do they burn people at the stake?" and sometimes we get a question like this: "Why are the Indians so war-like, vicious, savage and cruel, always picking on the poor innocent white people?" Now let's take a look at that word scalping, that word used so freely and used so often describing Indian life, especially in these evil -- and I mean evil with a capital letter -- T.V. programs, "High Chaperral", "Trail West", "Wagon Trails West", you name it right down the line, kid comic magazines, movie picture shows and some history books that are full of lies, and I can easily prove they're lying history books. I'm going to tell you folks something that might surprise you -- the oldest record we have of scalping did not come from America, it came from far across the ocean in the white man's land, Europe. Records left by the Romans and Greecians describe the customary ways of those they called the "White Savages" who lived in the North of them in Europe. They said that these white savages had many barbarous and savage customs and ways, among which was taking the scalps of their enemies, taking the heads of their enemies, quartering the bodies of their enemies, taking these various objects home with them, hanging them up surrounding their villages to frighten their enemies with them. That's the oldest scalping record in the world right from Europe.

When the French and the English came over to this country, America, and fought over the land that didn't belong to either one of them, the English said to their Indian neighbors, especially to the Iroquois, "We do not like the French, nor their Indian friends. We will give you, our good Indian brothers, so much for the scalp of every man, woman, and child above the age of 10", and the French said the same thing to their Indian neighbors regarding the English, and those Indians who were friendly to them. There are some honest historians who believe that just possibly scalping was not an original Indian custom. Very likely it was introduced over here into America by these two very savage, wild peoples from Europe. Let's face the facts for once, take a look at their history. They certainly were very war-like people; they practically conquered the world before they were satisfied, if they were satisfied. It's a known fact that some of our Eastern Indians along the Atlantic Seaboard didn't know a thing about scalping until white frontiersmen started collecting Indian scalps for bounties. As a matter of fact, many of them made a profitable business out of it. It was very easy getting peaceful, friendly, unsuspecting Indian scalps and when the bounties was paid for those scalps nobody could tell the difference; and when those bordermen from Kentucky killed that great Indian leader and patriot, Tecumseh, they actually boasted that not only did they take his scalp and those of other Indians who fell that day, but they also skinned their bodies and made razor straps out of their skin. It was a common practice on the frontier. They did it to our own Iroquois right in New York state during the American Revolution; they started using Indian skin for razor straps and made leggings for their officers out of Indian skin. Where the city of New York stands today, for kicks, for amusements like you watch a ball game, Indians were skinned alive and one authority said that at one time it was possible to buy in a certain European country pouches made from baby Indian skins.

Let's take a look at that next word used just as freely and often describing Indian life and from the same source -- "burning at the stake". That's not necessarily an Indian custom. How about Joanne of Arc, you've heard of her, haven't you? How did she die? Wasn't she burned at the stake? Then I'll ask you people a question: By the Indians? No, by her own people, the English. Four years before America was discovered, Joanne of Arc was one of thousands of people burned at the stake at that time in Europe. Many, many years later some of those poor people were burned at the stake for stealing a loaf of bread to feed a hungry family and some because they did not believe in the religion that those in power happened to believe in. Our Indians may have burned their enemies at the stake, but I never heard of Indians burning their own people. I've never heard of Indians burning at the stake because a hungry family had to steal food. In fact, if you know anything about the early Indians and their peculiar ways (very peculiar to the first Europeans who came over here), in an Indian settlement nobody went hungry, not even your enemy, unless everyone went hungry. In the Indian way of thinking, you would be shaming yourself to sit down and eat while a hungry person watched you without sharing it with him, and I've never heard of Indians burning anyone at the stake over religion.

As for the last question occasionally asked in these letters we get at the museum (and many, many times drilled in my young head, when I was a little boy going to school): "Why were the Indians so war-like, vicious, savage and cruel, always picking on the poor innocent white people?", that is an absolute false statement and any historian who has done any research whatsoever knows it to be a false statement. Almost without exception, the early explorers of this country, from Christopher Columbus right down the line, not just in North America, but in Central and South America too, have testified -- in their records, in their journals which weren't destroyed, they're still in existence today, they can be read right now -- almost everyone of them testified that they were royally welcomed by the American Indian, treated to the best the Indians had to offer. Later on, in defense of their country, the Indians did what any brave man would do, of course. They fought to defend their homes, their women and children, and even Christopher Columbus himself wrote these words about the Indians to the King of Spain:

> "What they, the Indians, have they do not refuse to those who ask; with deep love they prefer others to themselves; they give much for little and bear with small or no return. When we landed, women, men, children, adults, youths and olds forgot

> the fear that they had felt for us and came to see us; a great crowd fell on the road, some bringing food, some drinks, but all affected by the sweetest love and an almost unbelievable good will."

That's what Columbus wrote about Indians and he was one of many who wrote concerning his fine treatment by the American Indians.

Now we honor Columbus; we know he was a very brave man; there's not one question about that, but are we taught all about him and his relationship with Indians? Do we, for instance, know that he came to America four different times and sailed back across the ocean with over 2,000 of these same Indians who had treated him so kindly to sell as slaves? In our history books, we read about our Pilgram fathers, so-called, and the Puritans that followed them, and we're lead to believe that they were a group of holy saints incapable of doing anything wrong, very, very religious. But how many made their living by kidnapping and selling Indians as slaves or trading them out for rum in the far West Indies? How do you suppose the province of Labrador got its name, do you know what it means? "Land of Laborers, Indian slaves." In the history books, we read how an Indian chief held up his hand in friendship to the Pilgrims and said, "Welcome, Englishmen"; how surprising it was to find in America an Indian who could speak English. That history book that every kid in the country reads contains a misleading explanation as to how come this Indian could speak English. What's known is half the truth, which can be very misleading. It says he learned it from traders, they don't say what kind. Slave traders -- he and several of his people had been kidnapped and became slaves across the ocean. He managed to escape and got back to America -- that's how come he could speak English. The truth was, the Indian wasn't always a revengeful monster that many would have you believe. Especially in New England histories, those people who dispossessed your ancestors, those who have dominated the history books of United States for 150 years, they slaughtered, shot, butchered, and burned Indians. They broke every treaty and agreement they ever made with Indians and not just with Indians defending their lands, but with any Indian who had any land they wanted. Not just in the New England states, those same people left a trail of Indian blood and broken treaties clean across this continent.

Now as time is moving on, I want you to think, you folks, think of where you've been traveling, think of this beautiful country. Isn't it beautiful? You know something? It's ugly, compared to when the Indians lived here and controlled it. Look at what non-Indians have done to this beautiful land and in such a short time! A little over 200 and some years and look what they have done to it. I traveled across this country -- look at your rivers, they're floating with tin cans, garbage, pollution, filth, you name it. By my place once there were salmon, gone forever. I'm a science teacher myself, and it takes from 200 to 10,000 years for one inch of top soil to form; that long for one little inch of top soil, depending on the location. In some parts of the Midwest, this short time the white man has been there, a little over 200 years, 18 inches of top soil have washed down into the Gulf of Mexico. They ruined this country, this beautiful country and they did it so quick and they did it for only one stupid European reason: "Get rich quick!" regardless, never mind the future of your grandchildren, think of me only, get rich quick, they didn't think like Indians. Look what they've done to this land; think what this land was once when you could drink out of the Mississippi River, you didn't have to worry about getting typhoid; when you could look in the sky and see the eagle fly over your head, the eagle that they have also destroyed. I ask whites to pretend for a minute that they are Indians, that buried underneath that earth are the bones of their mothers and fathers and their people from way, way back. How would they feel? What would they do if strange people came from across the ocean and said to them: "My master, the King of England, or the King of France, or the King of Holland, or the King of Sweden, or the King of Portugal or some other king, 3,000 miles across the ocean has just generously given me a large grant of land here in America. Big-hearted fellow he is, very generous of him, 3,000 miles away and that grant of land stretches all the way from the Atlantic Ocean right straight across this continent to the Pacific Ocean so you Indians, you don't have no right to it at all, you don't belong here. We've just passed the bill through our legislature that you and all Indians must get out. Go beyond the Mississippi River. There's a desert there I don't need for a while yet, get going.

What's that? You say that long ago your fore-fathers made a treaty with my fore-fathers; that that treaty was to last as long as the water flows and the real grass grows; that in that treaty your fore-fathers gave my fore-fathers this vast track of millions of acres of the richest land in the world with all its resources for the privilege of living on that little reservation undisturbed; that that treaty was signed by George Washington; you want to know if we're going to honor that treaty? No! We are not going to honor that treaty. We have the right to break Indian treaties any time we wish, they mean nothing to us. We have the right to take Indian lands any time we wish. You here probably want to know what gives us that right. Let me explain it to you. We just passed the bill in our legislature, they gave us that right. We do not care if the bones of your mothers and fathers do lie beneath that earth, nor do we care if George Washington did sign that treaty. We want to make a dam, that's a good, cheap place to make it, get out or drown. What's that you Delaware people say? You dark people would like to live with us nice people and share this land together? No, we can never allow that, you must go away because we want it all. What would you do? You would fight, every one of you, or you wouldn't be men or women and you would be doing the very same thing that early Indians did and present day Indians are doing in trying to hang on to their little territories.

Those early Indian people were not a vicious, cruel race of savage people, and don't let any lying history book written by a lying thief ever try to tell you they were. They were very trusting, they were very honest, and they were very big-hearted people. In fact, if you want to call it a weakness, those were always and inevitably the Indians' two greatest weaknesses. He was too trusting and honest, and he was too big-hearted. If those early Indians had wanted to get rid of the early colonists who first came here to this country, United States and Canada, if they had wanted to get rid of them long ago, it would have been the easiest thing in the world for them to do, they wouldn't have had to lift a finger. All they had to do was turn their backs and walk into the forest. The white man who first came here from across the sea was as helpless as a baby. They would have died of starvation, they would have died if it hadn't been for the help of the Indians.

Now I want to tell you something. Don't think that because those terrible things happened long ago that they happened all over. There were many white people who were great friends of the Indians and there are white people today who, when they know what really happened, are very angry and very ashamed and they want to do something about it. Some of the best fighters for Indians are the white people, who have worked their heads off for Indians and who know lots of our Indian history because they want to help the Indians. So don't say, like a blanket, everybody's like this, no, and don't be bitter. I know it's easy to say this. You think, well, okay, I forgive, and then when you see a blasted T.V. program where they run the Indians down and then you get angry all over again, you can't help it.

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Remember, if you're a doormat and you take abuse, people are always going to wipe their feet on you. But if you fight back and your only weapon is the truth, it's not hard to find it. People respect people who respect themselves and if you don't respect yourself and you take this abuse, the white men will look right down their noses at you. But now you can fight back, not by war but by words, with written things, that's the only weapon you've got and you don't have to use anything but the truth and it's not hard to find, believe me.

Ray Fadden's talk had two important impacts on the participants at the Memremcook Conference. The first immediate impact was to reveal to the young people that:

a) our American Anglo-Saxon form of government is based on Indian form of government;

b) Indians have made significant contributions to the world in the form of agricultural products, inventions, medicines, etc.;

c) there is no such thing as white civilization in America because all races have contributed to our present civilization;

d) there have been many mistakes made in history books about the Indians being savages and wild animals all of the time.

Ray Fadden told them that Indians were and are a genuine race of people with a unique history and culture which should be a source of great pride. In other words, he told them that Indians do not have to take a back seat in worthiness, respect or pride to any race of men in the world. Indians, he felt, should be hearing in school about the good things their culture contributed instead of the stereotypes of Indians as a savage instead of a decent race of men and women. Equally important, he gave the young people powerful ammunition to help them fight these stereotypes forced on them by non-Indians.

The second impact came gradually, during the course of the week. When the conference started, the young people looked, acted, and talked like young people anywhere. There was a reluctance to be totally Indian. But Ray Fadden's words took hold and as each day came and went you could see the transformation taking place. It was a transformation from being nondescript young people into being vibrant and concerned young Indian people. Self-consciousness became confidence. By the end of the week, the young people had full control of the conference; they were attempting to solve critical problems; and they were expressing Indian culture in story, song, and dance. To say that Ray Fadden's words were exclusively the cause of this transformation would not be fair to all the other speakers. But he did start the conference off on a note of Indian pride -- and that pride seemed to grow each day. His words helped to create a new faith -- a faith in themselves.

The original format set by the conference planning committee had been for key presentations (like Mr. Fadden's) to be made to the total group. Then everyone would break up into small groups, of 8 - 10 young people and one adult group leader, to discuss the talk or speech which the whole group had heard. After the small groups had met, everyone would reassemble again for a group discussion or question-and-answer period.

Following the first "small group" sessions after Ray Fadden's talk, the whole group of conference participants reassembled for a question-and-answer period. Some of the questions pertained directly to Mr. Fadden's talk, and were asked of him:

Question:

How do you go about proving the facts are true and the text books are false?

Answer:

That's easy. Go back to the documentary records, right back. A lot of those stories that you see in the movies and so on are written by people who never saw an Indian in their life before. It's very easy tearing them apart, one of the easiest jobs there is. There are books on Indians, that are good about it. They tell the truth.

Question:

Would it be possible for an Indian to write a history book on Indians?

Answer:

Sure, Indians have just as much ability as anyone else. There are books written by Indians.

Question:

Why can't we learn our own language in school?

Answer:

Well, you know I wonder about that a little bit. Actually your language is talked by your father and mother. If you had an Indian school to run the whole thing you probably could. If you could talk to your existing school board, or whatever, and get them to allow Indians to come there and teach the kids their language, I imagine there would be white people who would like it too. I don't know why you couldn't do it at other places. You'd have to get a good teacher who knows the language. That's all I can think of. Some Indians have written little pamphlets on their own language.

Question:

If you were able to teach Indians culture, when could you start?

Answer:

I'm a retired school teacher. I've been trying to retire for three or four years. Also I've got a wife that's wondering where I am right now. When Indian people visit my museum, I make it a point to teach them all the history I can while they are there. It's kind of hard for me to get away. I'm not a young chick anymore.

Question:

Would you be available to teach in our proposed Indian school?

Answer:

You're putting the hard pressure to me. I really can't answer that. You can ask my wife! But there are many of you who could do that. I'd do all I can, I'd help all I can. But look. There's a young woman right there (Eugenia Thompson, Penobscot editor of the Maine Indian Newsletter) who has done a lot on her own Indian history. Now I get her magazine. Now I could make from the copies I've got at least seven charts, big Indian charts on information that is in her paper. That's what I mean; you have your talent right with you.

Question:

Did the North American Indians really originate from the East, meaning China?

Answer:

These things are all theories you understand. For some reason everybody asks that question. I don't know why it's so important, but you get that all the time in my museum. The most popular theory is that the Indians came from Asia by way of the strait across the Bering Sea. There's another theory that they came from Europe by way of Greenland. There's another theory that Indians are a lost tribe of Israel and somehow they wandered through all the other people. There's another theory that they came from the islands across the Pacific. There's another theory that they came from a lost continent in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, called Atlantis. As far as the Iroquois are concerned, those are theories. The creator put the Indians here and that's where he was from. This is his country. That's as far as they're concerned themselves. You can take it any way you want, that's your privilege. One Indian said: "It's strange, the first horse came from America; he was a little horse and he made it across to Europe and died out in America and he grew out there into a big horse. The oldest horses in this continent of America, somehow they wandered over there. The oldest camels came from South America; somehow they wandered to Europe. How come the Indians wandered over here?

Question:

Did the Micmacs and the Maliseets have the same kind of government as the Iroquois?

Answer:

No, I don't know what system they had. I imagine there was some similarities. Probably the Micmacs and Maliseets had their own system. They must have had some kind of government.

Question:

Why do the teachers stress the white man's side of the story of our ancestors?

Answer:

The white teachers have never been taught the Indian history. Believe me, they need Indian history even more than the Indians do. As far as Indians are concerned, they know almost nothing about themselves. There are people right in Europe today, in Germany, in England and these countries, that know more about Indian history than the average Americans or Canadians know. They know what happened to these Indians and they like Indians. They try to immitate them. And they help Indians when they need help in Washington, right from the old country. They never did an thing wrong to the Indians so they have nothing to hide. When you hurt somebody, you're never going to love them. When you help somebody you care for them, you'll always be friends to them. When you help out any body, you love them and when you hurt somebody you'll always hate them. I think that's maybe what happened in the white man's case with the Indians.

Question:

How did the word get to Europe that the Indians in North America were vicious and cruel?

Answer:

That's easy. If I'm going to rob you, if I'm going to swindle you and rob you, the first people I have to convince is my own people. If that man has something I want, I'm going to steal it. I've got to convince all my family that I'm doing the right thing. So that man is a dirty, blood-thirsty, good-for-nothing savage, so that people who belong to me will say, "Well, that's all right. As long as he deserves this, let's forget about him." That's why, because when you steal from somebody, when you hurt somebody, you've got to sell your own people that idea first. Before they can make any land steals, or before they can take a reservation, they've got to convince their own people that they're doing a nice thing. I've got to convince my own people that what I'm doing is right, so that good-for-nothing savage is a good thing to get rid of. He deserves that. That's the reason why, there's no question about it. It's been proved by history time and time again. Every race that encounters another race and treats them wrong has to convince their own people first, because their own people are really good at heart. If they knew the truth, they wouldn't stand for it. They would be angry and you got to keep that lie going for the next 200 years. And that's all it is, a lie.

Question:

This, I feel, is an important question. How would we students go about finding history about Micmacs and Maliseets?

Answer:

That's going to be the hardest job of all, because you have to do an awful lot of research. You probably do have old records. Sometimes the history books will slip and tell what they really did to the Micmacs and Maliseets. Remember this, when the white men first came here, they couldn't get along without your help. That Expo '67 up in Montreal, Canada, told that story pretty good.

Question:

Did the Indians have wars among themselves before the white man came?

Answer:

Oh yes, but not such as they were after the white man came. When the white man landed here, they pushed one tribe and he had to push another tribe and it went across the country just like that. The Indians didn't go to war until the white man did in the first place. It was more like a game. Let me give you a little idea. One time I took a bunch of boys to Oklahoma and we went to one place and this Indian fellow said to us: "I'll tell you something funny that happened here once." He said some Kiowas met some Comanches; they went over a hill and almost bumped into each other. So they got ready for a fight and one of the Kiowas said: "You wait a minute, you Comanches. We don't have any bullets." "Ah! You don't have any bullets? Well, we'll loan you half of ours. But what's the use of fighting now? It's night time and we won't be able to see." So the next morning, they had their battle and when they were through having their battle, they left and went home. It wasn't like the white man's war where they really wipe out everybody. It was more like an exciting game.

Question:

It may take a lot of money and so on in order to build the history of the Micmac and the Maliseet people. You've done a lot for the Mohawks; where did you get the money to do all this?

Answer:

I got no money from anybody. I did it myself and I thought our kids should have it. We turned out one pamphlet like that and in the pamphlet we told the story, what it meant, and then we sold enough of those and from that money we turned up the next pamphlet which was on the history of the Iroquois and then we sold enough of those and then we did another. We didn't get any help from anybody. In fact, we were discouraged by most people. They didn't help us; they tried to discourage us.

Question:

What do you think of an all-Indian school?

Answer:

That's a good question. It's nice to have an all-Indian school, but I also think that you get something when you go and mix with other people, too. We had an all-Indian school once but we weren't allowed to teach our Indian history there. It was a policy not to. So what I did, I did it after school. Unfortunately, white teachers don't know anything about Indian history and they are still following that old pattern about this savage Indian and how our noble ancestors came over here and did all these nice things for them and so on. It's a hard question to answer. The Indian people need Indian history. I say white people need it too. I'll tell you one thing. An Indian school should be run by Indians. I think you have as much chance to teach your own Indian history as white people have to teach theirs.

Question:

How much responsibility belongs to the school and how much to the parents with regard to the teaching of culture and language to the Indian pupils?

Answer:

The sad thing is that the parents don't even know their own history. But language -- if the parents don't know the history, they do know their language. Actually, they should teach their children their language. But as far as culture is concerned, it's a sad thing. That's been taken away from the Indian; his own history and culture; it's been done through religion and through government policy. I can give you plenty of examples of it, but I don't like to create bad feelings. I could talk all night on this subject.

Question:

The meaning of that question is how much responsibility belongs to the school? You've answered the latter part, now how about the school?

Answer:

Well, if they're going to teach pride in themselves, a good deal will have to be in the school.

Question:

Yes, but the responsibility?

Answer:

Any school has to be responsible for what it teaches to the children. If the school doesn't turn out any graduates, it isn't any good. Something is wrong with it.

Question:

It's the responsibility that we're trying to pin down. How much belongs to the school or to the system, or to the government or whoever runs it, and how much to the parents?

Answer:

Well, I think the parents are responsible that the children learn their language, unless the school has a regular Indian teacher. As far as the culture is concerned, the school has to be responsible because most of the parents don't know it.

Question:

What about Indian language in schools?

Answer:

If you can get a teacher to teach it, it would be a good thing.

Question:

Well, they can teach French, why not Indian?

Answer:

Why not? There are some schools in the United States that do teach Indian. I don't know why we've got to learn Russian.

Question:

Should we concentrate on education of Indian people and in answering this you can deal in the second part of this, should we concentrate on the education of the non-Indian?

Answer:

Both of them; you should concentrate on both of them. I believe the white man should be taught Indian history too, because he's not going to have a true understanding until he knows what really happened.

Question:

You're saying then, in answer to the question, that we should concentrate on both?

Answer:

Absolutely. You think those charts were turned out for the Indians alone? They're turned out for white people too. You'd be surprised how many white schools want to know Indian history. We get orders from schools all over the country for those charts because they want their white children to know the truth. I've got many letters from schools that were very glad to get those charts because they couldn't find them any other place. They couldn't find that information. You have to provide that yourself on your own tribe.

Question:

What do you think the government thinks about Indian education teaching history and language? I know this is not a cultural question, but I'm wondering about your thoughts.

Answer:

What the government generally does is just sits back and waits till it's all over, and then they forget about it. That's what they've always done. Sooner or later they wear the Indians down and it's forgotten. I think the government will just have to be shown what you can do about it.

Question:

Mr. Fadden, could you tell us some of the things the white man's education has deliberately put into their system to try to destroy Indians and their culture?

Answer:

Well, mainly they just ignored them. They never put in the contributions of Indians. They never told how the Indians gave them their start in this country and how many things they do today are actually Indian ways, and foods they eat are Indian foods and the way they think and entertain, the games they play, and so on. They just ignore the Indian and they try to justify what they did to the Indians. It's not a very honorable thing they did. I suppose to cover their guilt. Fifty years ago the history books were even worse than today. They're getting a little better, but they have a long ways to go yet.

Question:

This isn't a question, but some feelings of our group. It was suggested that the Indian culture and history should be taught. Recommended: a committee should be formed to study Micmac and Maliseet history and make charts such as Ray Fadden showed us. No doubt help could be received from New Brunswick Department of Cultural Affairs. The two main causes for dropping out of school are language and information. Another recommendation would be that one of the purposes of an ideal school could be to present a true picture of Indian history in contrast to the false image created in books, newspapers and television.

Answer:

He's got a good idea. You have to specialize in your own people. That means you got to find somebody that's interested enough in your own reservations who is going to spend hours of time doing research. You're going to have to dig down in those old records of a couple of hundred years ago. Let's face it, they were very prejudiced and they had an awful big ego. But once in a while, when you read their records, they'll let something slip. And you have to get somebody to spend a lot of time. You've got to go through your documentary history of Maine, probably the whole New England states. Hours of work, but it is worth it, because of your children. You will be doing something for them and then if you have any artists among you who can make charts just like those -- a twelve- or fifteen-year-old boy made those, and the bigger charts were made by older people. You can put these things down; they should have that knowledge, especially of your own people, but you should know a little bit about all Indians. The same as with white men. What do they do? They teach Canadian history, but they also teach world history. They'll teach something about their Romans, Grecians, Egyptians and so on -- a little bit of those other great cultures where they came from, but they specialize in their own.

So that's what every people should do. That's why we use those charts. We are always hoping that other tribes would do the same with their own people. It's hard for one person to do that. It's almost a life work, but there's no reason why some of you, yourself, could not get interested enough to do what we did. Especially on your own people, but some of all. All over the whole country you're all in the same boat and if that boat sinks you're all dead. Specialize in your own, but bring in some of everybody. I have enough material that I could turn out a thousand charts on the Iroquois alone, and I wouldn't repeat myself on any of them if I had the time to do it. That's just on Iroquois alone. A million could be made on all the Indians, believe me.

Some of the questions had to do with the conference itself. A good many young people -- and some adults -- had come to Memremcook without really understanding what was expected to happen. They were unwilling just to sit and listen to speeches. They wanted to know why they were there. Some of the questions showed the beginning of a movement to divide the young people and the adults into separate groups, so that the young people could speak more freely and make the happening really meaningful to them. As one group leader put it:

> "Our next meeting, us old codgers will leave the younger ones together. They will come up with their own ideas about what an Indian school should be like. They were too shy today to tell what was in their minds, and so probably by tomorrow I think that -- on their own -- they will have some good proposals.
>
> "Another thing -- we are quite concerned that in the past governments have stopped trying to solve problems after a definition of policy. They did not carry on, and as a result there are rows of files stacked in government offices and nothing is being done about them. So this is a warning to you people. What are you going to do after your findings of this week?"

Other questions were asked of the planning committee, or of the conference group as a whole:

Question:

What brought up this idea of helping Indians plan a school? Does anyone here want to answer that question?

Answer:

I think I can answer it. From what I heard, they've made a study of Indian drop-outs -- youngsters that started school and they never finished. They made it as high as the fourth or fifth grade or maybe eighth, and then they quit. Fifteen-hundred start in the first grade and about twelve end up in high school. So they figure there must be something wrong with the present system. Why should so many Indian children drop out? So they thought perhaps anything is better than what they've got, for that's a pretty poor showing, so that's what this meeting is about. It's held over maybe the youngsters themselves -- why they drop out. I don't know. I know I wanted to quit when I was sixteen, too.

Question:

Why do they drop out?

Answer:

I'll tell you what I think. I think a lot of it is prejudice in textbooks and movie pictures and so on. That's what I understand this meeting is about, to talk over that. Why? Anything is better than what it is right now. There should be more children educated, more children going to college, to universities -- more Indian children. That's what I understand this meeting is about.

Question:

This meeting came on so sudden. Everyone wants to know what's happening, what's going on, who's behind all this. Like no one knows what the're here for. What's expected of us? I brought up the question. I wish somebody had the answer. So what is it? Remember when you were here the last time, when we had a meeting on drop-outs. These students don't know. They don't know what they're here for. They don't know what's expected of them. All of a sudden they come up with this big idea about an all-Indian school. Who are they? Who came up with the idea? Nobody has explained to these kids. I didn't even know anything, I didn't have an idea, and I was supposed to be on the planning committee. Well, when we were in Fredericton, this planning committee met there. But how many of us know about it? How many of us know anything about it? I mean like, we're all sitting here looking at everybody else. They all bring up good points. What are the points supposed to come to if they don't know any background. We can't get anywhere if we don't know what's behind all this. Like maybe some of the kids suspect, you know, maybe Indian Affairs is behind it, or maybe somebody else is behind it, maybe someone is getting these people to do this, you know. They say, all along, no one has cared about our education, nobody has tried to help us and all of a sudden this idea of an all-Indian school comes up and everyone is called to a meeting and everyone is supposed to talk and nobody knows what they're talking about. Somebody should be here to explain to these kids what the heck they're here for. What's expected of them? They don't know. I don't even know about it.

Answer:

That question was in the group that I was in, and I hoped it would come up on the floor at the conference, because I thought maybe some other people would have the same concern. The way she asked the question was: "Why are 'they' behind this, or what are 'they' up to." I tried to get her to identify "they" and she seemed to feel that there were more people lurking in the undergrowth, planning this conference and pushing this idea. I don't think that's true. My feeling is this: we are starting with one known fact and that is that Indian students all over Canada and all over the United States are not completing a high school education in very large numbers. The drop-out rate, or the push-out rate, or the turn-off rate, or whatever you call it, is very high. This is a fact, so there must be something wrong, somewhere in the system that now exists. Now my personal involvement here is because I've taught in Indian schools; I've seen things wrong with the system. I've seen kids leave the school or be shamed by the school and this bothers me as a person. I think most of the people who have been involved in planning this conference, or planning the conference the Union held in May, or in discussions, or in any other activity, are people who individually have concerns when they see this kind of thing happen, when they see people be made ashamed of themselves, when they see people not complete an educational program the way that they should to earn a living or to live or whatever.

So I think what is true is that perhaps people -- Indians and Whites from Canada and the United States -- have a common concern about a common fact, the drop-out rate. And it's as simple as that. There is nothing behind this, there is no motive behind this, except the feeling that has been expressed by many, many Indians to me and to others -- maybe we could do it better! Certainly we could not do it worse! Why not, why couldn't Indians plan their own educational system? Surely the results would not be worse than that planned by other people.

Why not, why couldn't we do it? I don't know why not. That's why I'm here -- maybe the answer is, we can. The why not is so strong that the conference is being held today, this week, without any money. We still don't know where we're going to find the money to pay the Institute for the facilities. We don't have it. But the planning committee wanted to have the conference now and they didn't want to wait until the money was collected. So, speaking as a person and I think probably many of the other people here that I know, they're here because they're individuals with a common concern and they are individuals who want to find an answer to the question, "Why couldn't Indians do better in planning some kind of educational program?" I don't know if that answers all the question but it's kind of a personal testimonial thing.

Question:

How is the Union of New Brunswick Indians involved?

Answer:

Actually, part of the answer starts quite some time back. As we know, not only from the seminar which was held here at Memremcook for drop-outs, but in the field trips which were made to the different reserves, we could hear people saying, "So many kids started high school, or so many kids started school, and we had such and such a drop-out rate, or force-out rate." On some reserves that force-out rate would be as high as 80%, 15 kids out of 21 would drop out in one year. Of course the Union was very concerned for a variety of reasons, because on the Indian committees the young people had nothing to do and they were made to drop out of a system for a variety of reasons. I think part of the answer lies in making education more meaningful to the young Indian people. And so if the young Indian people ask themselves what are we doing here, well, what they're doing here are a number of things.

They're giving their experiences that they've had. For what reason they've dropped out or why they stay in school. They're basically exposed to the school system now where they don't play any meaningful role as far as participating in the education system. So, if they had an opportunity to give their ideas, what ideas would they give?

The organization's thoughts on this line are based on this premise -- that the young people have something to offer, and so this is why people from Nova Scotia, Maine, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island were invited to come here. But something must happen to their ideas, and this is the whole thing. If there is a committee, and there presumably will be a committee that comes out of this, the committee will take the ideas we give here and to carry those along in their planning.

When the first day's meetings ended on July 14, there was still considerable confusion over the purpose of the conference which became evident during the final set of questions and answers of the afternoon session. Therefore, when the planning committee met after supper, they decided to discuss what the conference was about and to clear up any suspicions about who was behind it the first thing next morning.

Likewise, the group leaders were concerned that adults were playing too big a role in the conference, and suggested that the session too closely resembled a typical school day where ideas were channeled by the teachers. Several of the young members of the planning committee expressed the same feeling, adding that the conference, itself, should operate like the proposed school -- the students should take a greater part in deciding what should be studied. The committee, therefore, decided to split the young people and adults up into separate groups the next morning, after James Gillis' talk.

TUESDAY MORNING, JULY 15

The morning's first speaker was Edward Hinckley, the former commissioner of Indian Affairs of Maine, presently a consultant to the Passamaquoddy Tribal Councils and to the Department of Indian Affairs. Mr. Hinckley discussed his role at the conference.

I am here because Indians are dropping out of high school all over, both Canada and United States. I am here because Indians have said to me: "We think we could run a better educational system that would somehow meet the needs of the Indian students better than existing schools so that they would not drop out, so that they would complete an education that meant something to them."

Now I believe this is true. I believe that Indians could do a better job of finding an educational system but then immediately the question comes up -- who is going to pay for this better educational system? I think basically the answer is that the white man is going to pay for it. He must, because many of the problems that exist today were caused by the white man. Before he came, Indians didn't have problems with kids dropping out of high school. So the problems came with the white man and I think it is only reasonable and appropriate that white money be used to pay for a better system, planned by Indians. If you go to a person with money and you ask him to put his money into an Indian-planned school, essentially what he is doing, he is buying a piece of that school; he is putting out his money and he expects some kind of return like satisfaction, like a feeling that he is helping Indians, like a feeling that he is advancing educational development or something, that he is buying something with his money. In order to get his money (when I say "his", I mean a foundation or an agency or individual or government or anything), in order to get his money you have to tell him ahead of time what he is buying and you have to describe it to him. The reason I am here, and I hope the purpose of the conference in some part, is so that at the end of it, I and other people like myself who believe that we can find money to build your school, will have an outline, a description, a picture in words of what this school is going to be like. There's just one thing; if you have a question at any time during a speech, stop the speaker and ask him.

So what I need out of this conference is a word picture from young Indian people of what kind of a school they would like to build or develop or plan or organize. I need as close a description as possible, as exact a description as possible. I need to know things like: what age group will it serve; what the staff requirements will be; where should it be; how long should it operate; what is it supposed to do, so that I can take this information and other people can take this information, too, and go to people with money and say: This is what we are selling, this is what we want money for, this is what we want your money to help us buy.

So essentially, I think that Indians can do a better job in planning their education. As they say, they could certainly not do a worse job. I think it would be possible to find money to do this better job. But in order to find the money we have to be able to describe what it is that we want to build and that's why I'm at this conference. I think it's also important to know, at least for an Indian person to know, what meaningful role the Indian people would play, how it's going to be set up. Well, actually, I think the Indian people should play almost every role in this school and will certainly play part of the role in terms of raising the money. I think the conference isn't a thing; it is not an end; it is not a result; it is a part of a long process. The process began when the first Indian kid dropped out of high school and that was many, many years ago and the process is continuing and hopefully the process will end, if it ever does, when almost no Indian kids are dropping out of school.

Question:

What is going to happen if the Indians can build this school?

Answer:

Well, if they can design it or get it, I assume they would go to it. And it is my belief that the product of the school, the graduate would be better equipped to live a successful life than the current drop-out.

Question:

How many reserves in Maine have up to grade seven . . . ?

Answer:

The three reserves in Maine have public elementary schools -- Peuobscot that goes through grade five, Indian Township that goes through grade six, and Pleasant Point goes through grade eight and then they go to town schools in much the manner as it is done in New Brunswick.

Question:

Which reservation had grade eight?

Answer:

Pleasant Point.

Question:

How are the students doing; do any drop out of school?

Answer:

The Governor is here, but they seem to be dropping out more than they should.

Question:

How is the elementary school attendance in Maine?

Answer:

It's pretty good over there, of course. This is partly because it's compulsory to age 16 but that's only part of the reason. I think the difference here is, they go to school at home up through the elementary grades and they then go away. Even if it's just to the next town beyond that.

Question:

The reason I'm asking this is, here, the biggest drop out in our area is in the elementary school.

Answer:

Well, I guess I'll have to say this: if Indian students plan a school and say this is for ages 16 to 24 or something like that, that's not going to meet everybody's needs. A lot of people have said to me, we need to improve our elementary school or the teachers. I think this is also a part of the total situation. And I think things are being done on individual reserves to improve elementary schools, to improve teacher training. I think if you had an Indian-planned secondary school or independent school, one of the things it could do would be to have teacher training courses so teachers from provincial schools or public schools that serve Indians could come to this institution and get some training about Indians so they could go back to their classrooms with a better understanding of what Indian education is all about and what Indians are all about. But it should be emphasized that an Indian-planned secondary school, or an independent school, is not going to answer all of the educational needs of American Indians, but it might answer some of them and it might answer many needs of your high school drop-outs.

Question:

Will this school be at a high school level and with vocational type of learning?

Answer:

This is the kind of answer that I hope this conference will produce. In other words, what do the students think a school should be? I think the biggest problem this conference faces is getting out of the framework of the past and the schools you have gone to, just putting all that aside and thinking new thoughts about a new way of educating people. In many of the answers to the questionnaire, for example, questions about class grouping, some kids said, "I don't think we should do it that way. It might be inconvenient to the teachers." This is wrong. We're not interested in what would be convenient to teachers, we're interested in what the ideal situation would be.

I think the key word here is an independent school. A public school is governed by the laws of the state or the province. A federal school is governed by the laws of the federal government; an independent school is independent. It is governed by its own board of directors. That board of directors should be made up of people chosen by whom? This is one of the questions you need to answer. Who should be on the board of directors, who should make the decisions, who should make the rules? These are the questions. This is an imaginary school, it doesn't exist. No school like it has ever existed.

You people have got to describe it so that it can stop being imaginary and become real. I believe it can become real if you can describe it.

The next speaker was Greg Buesing, a non-Indian from Maine, who was working for the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Peter Dana Point.

There is one thing people keep on asking. I think you're still wondering about it -- who's behind this conference? The problem is that right now almost no one is behind it. One questionnaire said, "Mr. Prime Minister, what are you getting at and what are you going to do? What are you pulling?" The thing is that even the Indian Affairs branch refuses to give money for this. So we're pretty far in debt already. This conference was set up two weeks ago. Before two weeks ago, we didn't know we were going to have a conference here. It was all spontaneous. So the people behind it are the people who are interested in having this school or having an institution or something new and that's all. The idea has caught on around the country. But it's up to each individual who is interested in this thing to make it come true. It's really up to you students, because unless you want something new in your schools, it's not going to happen and there is no point carrying on any further with this conference. But if you think you have some ideas on education that are better than the ideas that you already face, then something can happen.

As far as the questionnaires go, when we sent them out, we sent them out for basically two purposes. The first purpose was the way the questions were worded -- by some of the questions you get an idea that we weren't talking about the old schools that you have. We hoped it would provoke a little thought. Today, Mr. Jim Gillis will be talking and will be presenting a lot of ideas and asking you a lot of questions to help you think about a school in new ways.

Question:

Who made up these questionnaires?

Answer:

The planning committee.

Question:

Who is the planning committee?

Answer:

Sarah Solomon, Veronica Atwin, Gailen Paul, Sharon Perley, Andy Nicholas, Greg Buesing, Bill Paul, Loretta Barlow, Donna Augustine, Anthony Francis, John Stevens, Eugene Francis, Aubrey Perley, Marjorie Perley, George Francis, Wayne Newell and others.

Question:

How many here are attending school?

Answer:

I don't know. I think Gailen is going to talk about this. The students should discuss who is going to be on the planning committee from now on. And I think the student groups are going to decide what this conference is going to do. I think the students here are going to have to decide what they want to learn, what sort of information they need to make decisions on, and where to go from here.

Question:

Does a private school have to meet certain federal and provincial standards?

Answer:

In the United States, so long as at the time of graduation you can pass certain tests, board of regent tests, something like that, you're okay. You also reach a certain level of knowledge or skills, then you can go on. I know that, for instance, where I've gone to college, people who have done very poorly on those examinations and people who have even flunked out of their high school have gotten into my college and they've done very well. So then again it's up to the university also, and the person's interest in going on to the university and finishing up his schooling. I'm pretty sure graduates from an Indian school won't have any trouble getting into a university.

Gailen Paul (Maliseet) was also one of the original members of the informal planning committee. He spoke next.

At our meeting or discussion last night with the planning committee and the group, we agreed that the students and the adults should group up. The adults would group in one room and the students would go in the other. I feel that students here are not speaking out more or less because the adults are talking all the time. But I feel that when the students get together, there'll be more facts and then they'll know what we're talking about and then a couple of days later we'll mix the adults and the students and we'll discuss what we came up with. How do the students feel about this? All right, we'll do it then.

THE SECOND DAY

Edward Hinckley, Consultant on Indian Affairs for the state of Maine, introduced the first speaker on Tuesday morning:

> "Our program this morning will be presented by Jim Gillis. Jim is a number of things. He used to work in the U.S. Office of Education in charge of their research program throughout the United States. He was, and still is, a consultant to the Kennedy Senate Sub-committee on Indian Education in the United States. The committee was started by Robert Kennedy and has been continued by Senator Edward Kennedy. He's the president of a firm in Washington, D.C., called Quality Educational Development, which helps develop curriculum materials for schools. And he recently started an educational research and development company in Maine.
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> "As a member of the Kennedy Sub-committee staff, he travelled around the United States and went to many hearings of Indian people talking about Indian education. What he means to talk to you about this morning are some of the questions that need to be answered by any individual or by any group of individuals such as this who are thinking about organizing a new school. So, without further ado, I'll introduce Mr. Jim Gillis."

Following are excerpts from Mr. Gillis' talk.

I'd like to pass out this little three-page piece of paper (contained in the Appendix). There are some words on the first page which you're welcome to read if you like and some words on the last page which you're welcome to read. What I want to address myself mostly to here is the list on page 2. There are a number of things that I would like to talk with you about this morning and there are a number of things I don't feel at all qualified to talk to you about. I should tell you what I'm not able to talk to you about. Number one, I'm not an Indian, and number two, I'm not an expert on Indian Affairs. What I do know a little bit about is education. So I would like to try and talk with you about education and some of the kinds of possibilities that you might want to consider. The final word of what you do, as far as I'm concerned, is yours; you should make that decision or set of decisions. Let me explore some possibilities with you for just a few minutes and then what I would like to do, if it's all right with you, is have a discussion. I would like to attempt to answer questions that you might have relating to education. I don't want to talk about an area that you may not be interested in. So let me see if I can stimulate just a little bit of interest and then, if you have questions, I'll attempt to answer them and if you don't, I'll sit down.

In order to put any kind of organization together and especially a formal school, there are a number of things that eventually a group such as this will have to look at. Now you may call them by different titles, or you may put them in different orders, but eventually you will have to look at most of these problems and probably some others. Let me run down the list with you here and indicate two or three things as examples under each of these headings. What I want to suggest to you is a different set of ways to look at each of these areas that you may want to consider. Perhaps out of this we can generate some interest and some possibilities. I am not going to suggest what I think is the way to build a school. What I want to try to do is suggest a whole set of options -- as many as we can think of at this time for you to consider.

Let's look at number one -- Sources of funds. Ed mentioned earlier that this is a serious problem and you all know this is a serious problem. One doesn't operate without either money or the things money buys. Probably the most important thing you can buy with money is the time of people who have talents and abilities to do the things you need done. In this case perhaps teachers, or perhaps administrators, or some combination of experts. Sources of funds can be looked at in a number of ways. You can raise local money, you can go to Federal Government sources, you can go to state or provincial government sources, you can go to foundations, you can go to individuals, you can attempt to sell things in order to bring in money on your own. There are other ways of doing it -- for example, it might be a bit off-beat, but one might consider the possibilities of selling stocks or bonds to somebody. Maybe somebody will buy them and raise money in that way. There are many problems in raising money and at some point you will have to agree to consider this and probably set up a committee or something to seriously consider how you get the kind of money for whatever you want to do.

You'll have to concern yourself eventually with the question of affiliation and, of course, there are a number of ways you can affiliate. You can look again at the accreditation policies; are they a concern to you, will they be a concern to you? Does your school need to be accredited? What kind of association will it have with existing professional organizations, all the way from cultural organizations to teachers' associations, to colleges that exist, and so on? These will have to be a concern to you later on because probably you will not want your school to be a complete entity unto itself. You probably want it to be a beginning point for young people to go on in other areas, either on to additional education and other colleges or other schools of one kind or another, or into other vocational areas, so that will probably be a concern of yours -- student progress.

You have to honestly concern yourself about student population. What will be your student population for the school? Will they be young people, pre-kindergarten? Will they be elementary students? Will they be what's considered the second year of high school? Will they be junior college? What kind of people will they be? And there may be some combinations. There have been some interesting things done, actually, around the world. A number of schools which I am familiar with in the United States have been mixing students together of various age levels, where the older student helped teach the younger student and they've actually set up formal situations in which this can happen, so that the high school student goes back a couple of hours a day, or a couple of hours a week, and works with junior high school students, and some of the junior high school students go back a couple of hours a day or a week and work with the elementary students, because the age difference is not so great between the junior high and the elementary school child as it is between the elementary school student and the teacher. Although the students do not necessarily replace the teachers, they work with them in combination. So there are many ways in which you can consider setting up student populations as well as student involvement.

At some point, I've mentioned a ten-year plan. It could be a five-year or a twenty-year plan. It doesn't matter too much, but at some point you probably will want to think about what size, what shape, what design will the school take. Are you thinking, or will you think, about one campus, or will you think about a decentralized situation where there are many smaller units that tie together somehow with an overall organization? Do you wish to locate it on the reserves or off reserves? These are concerns, before you put together a school, that you will have to make decisions on one way or another. As you do that, serious other questions will come up. If it's going to be one central school, will this mean it will be residential? Will students live on campus, in a dormitory kind of situation in colleges? Or will it be a commuter thing; a daily situation where the students can live at home wherever that may be and go to school during the day and be back home during the evening? That's a concern you'll have to look at.

Perhaps one of the most exciting areas to turn ideas over and to play with in a serious way is the curriculum area. By curriculum I mean those kind of things that go into the course content. What king of things do students want to study? What kind of things should they study? Why are they interested in studying?

What about instructional technology, education technology? We have the ability in this world to put man on the moon. We have television. We have a lot of educational technology as a result of the electronics world. How would you use this? It is there. The state of the art is very advanced. It can do a lot of things today and a lot of things can be done by you and by educators today that could not have been done ten or fifteen years ago. It really is brand new. And I might say that almost nobody knows how to use it, because it's so new. You may want to consider seriously these possibilities.

The question of directors was mentioned earlier. Who will be your board of directors or your governing body? How will they be constituted? How will you replace them? What relationship will they have with students or teachers or parents? Will students be represented on your governing board directly or indirectly? That, I think, is a serious concern of yours.

You have the whole question of physical facilities which is again tied back in with campus or decentralized school -- the way you'll be located or how it will be shaped. It will be necessary eventually for you to make a decision on what kind of physical facilities you would like, and you'll probably compromise with those you can afford and what will be the best mix that you can possibly make. There are new concepts in physical facilities and planning designs for construction. Probably the best kind of educational facility is not one such as this room. And it is not where you have a person standing in front of the room and a number of people with chairs facing the front. That's probably not the best. How will you construct or modify existing facilities or construct new ones?

What about the so-called professional personnel? Do you need professional teachers? Do you need professional administrators? If so, will they be trained and how? How will you select them? Perhaps you don't need them. Somehow this thing, this school, whatever it is that you create, has to be managed. Somebody has to make it happen, make it run. If it's decentralized, that will probably increase your need for management. If it's under one roof that may reduce your need for management. But some people will have to have some responsibilities in that area or it will not run, not for very long.

Philosophy and objectives -- what do you really want the school to achieve? What are your objectives, what are your goals, why do you want the school? What do you want it to do? What do you want students to be able to do when they come out of that school? That's not an easy question to answer. It's a very difficult question. How will you evaluate whether the school is any good? How will you build an evaluation process which will allow you to make sure that the school is not great for the first five or six years and after that becomes like any other school, like those that you're not happy with today? How will you prevent that from happening? That does tend to happen in all new ventures. They tend to start out great, full of fire and vigor, and within three or four years if you look at them and look at that which they were opposed to, it's difficult to tell the difference. That's a serious concern.

One of the things that I'm personally most excited about is considering the difference between elapsed time and learning. Let me take a moment to tell you what I mean by that. Most of the schools that I'm aware of in the world are primarily interested in elapsed time. If you're a student, people say to you: "How many years of high school have you completed?" If you go to college, they ask you how many semester-hours have you done, what have you accomplished that you have credit for. They don't ask you what you learned. When you go looking for a job, they ask you, "Have you completed twelve years of high school?" They don't say, "What do you know?" or "What can you do?" but "Have you completed four years of college or two years of college or six years of college?" It's an elapsed time kind of thing. How much time have you spent? You could have learned a great deal in the process of spending that time and then perhaps you didn't learn anything. And although time is necessary, some portion, some amount of time is necessary for learning, perhaps the real question is, "What kind of learning and how much learning?" That's what may be most important. That's perhaps one of the reasons why you're unhappy with schools today. Many people are unhappy with many schools today, primarily for that reason, I think. The kind of learning that students feel is relevant is not happening; they're not learning what they want to learn.

Let me go back to the curriculum area and the instructional technology for just a moment and then I'll stop and see if you have any questions. The instructional technology consists of tape recorders, video tapes, overhead projectors, film strips, slide projectors, movies, you name it. There's a whole area, including computors, available. And the ability to design learning packages or curriculum materials is considerably different now than it was fifteen or twenty years ago. And it's potentially very exciting. You can do things here. It's part of the state of the art, it is part of a knowledge we know how to do this pretty well. We will get better at it as we go along. We know how to do it pretty well already. We know how to build materials for individualized instruction. By that, I mean materials which will allow individuals to go at their own pace as fast as they want or as slow as they want -- to have choices, to have options, to study areas that they want to study at that time. And there's a way, many ways as a matter of fact, to set it out so this can be managed, so the instructional process can be managed, so that you do not need to have a classroom. You may never need to have a classroom. You may decide at some point that you want one, but you may never need to have a classroom as we normally think of a classroom, with thirty desks, a teacher, a blackboard and that kind of thing. That may not be necessary at all unless you so choose. And students may not have to go in groups, and they may not have to spend twelve years because somebody at some point in history said, "Hey, twelve years is a good thing." Maybe it is; maybe it's a bad thing. Maybe most of you could have learned in eight years what took you twelve years to go through, or maybe for each year you go to school, which is running nine months, perhaps you could learn what it is you are faced with in nine months in four months or perhaps in twelve. And you should have that opportunity, if you want to take it, sometimes to do that and take more time. Some people learn certain things faster than other people. We're all different -- we know that. But the educational system that most of us are familiar with takes a hundred tiny kids at one end (and we know they're all different) and we put them in the same tube and we say we're gonna squeeze them all through for twelve years and everyone of you will have to do the same thing or learn the same thing, and at the end you all have to pass the same tests when you come out and now you're all going to be different again. But for twelve years somehow you're all the same. Perhaps that doesn't make sense, perhaps there's a better way to do that. Let me stop and let me hear some questions.

Question:

Do you know of any schools, either in the U.S. or Canada, which are using computer-assisted or computer-related instruction?

Answer:

Yes, there are a number of schools that are working with computer-assisted instructions or computer-managed instructions in their operational day-to-day situation, yes.

Question:

Are any of these related to Indian schools?

Answer:

I'm not familiar with any Indian schools at the moment which have any computer-assisted instruction. There may be some, but I'm not aware of them. I don't think there are.

Question:

Are you aware if there are any all-Indian schools in U.S. or Canada?

Answer:

I think so, but I don't know about Indian schools as a subject area. I think someone else could better answer that question.

Question:

Could you explain something about how computers are used in schools and are they any good?

Answer:

Let me answer the second question first. Computers are not good or bad. They are machines. Automobiles are not good or bad -- they are machines. If you use an automobile well, it does a good job of taking you from one place to another. If you drive out of control and kill yourself, it's not potentially very good. It depends how you make use of it. I don't think computers are either good or bad.

I don't think computers have begun to realize their potentials. I don't think people using computers have begun to realize the ways in which the computers can be of help. I think they can be used for very good purposes.

There are three major areas in which computors have been used in education in the last ten or fifteen years, that I'm aware of. Number one, they have been used for what's called "administrative data processing", which means keeping records, essentially. It's a big memory bank; you can feed a whole bunch of numbers in it and it remembers all the numbers; you want them back out and it feeds them back out to you. That's about it. It tells you who was absent and who was present and how many days and how much money you spent for text books and all that kind of bookkeeping accounting. It's a data-collection kind of routine. That's been done for a fairly long time, ten or fifteen years in the education world and twenty years or more in the normal business world. That's one kind of application.

The second kind of application is called "computer-assisted instruction" and that's where you have a little sort of television set or teletype machine, which is like a typewriter, that's hooked up to the computer. And they have some variations on it with light panels and so on, where you can sit down and in typing you can kind of talk with the computer. It types something out on paper or on the television screen and you type something back and it types something out when you type something back, that kind of thing. And it would say "How much is 3 times 6?", and you would type "12" and it would say, "No, that's wrong. Try again." And you type "18" and it says, "Yes, that's right, and now go on the next question. The next question is, how much is 4 times 5?" It does that kind of thing. That's very expensive; it costs a lot of money for computer time. Mostly that's only being done where somebody has put in some money -- usually, in the U.S., the Federal Government has put in Federal dollars -- for special research kinds of projects to find out how does this stuff work. Is it worthwhile? The answers vary. It's exciting, it seems in some cases to be worthwhile, but it's awfully expensive and you can do the same things as well or a lot better for a lot less money. So at this point in history, probably computer-assisted instruction, at least in my view, and in the view of many others, is something that's interesting but very expensive. Maybe ten years from now it will be something that can be used on a much more widespread basis, but not at the moment.

The third area is what most people refer to as "computer-managed" or "computer-mediated instruction", which means that they use the computer off-line. You are not directly on-line; you're not tied in directly to the computer, and what happens there usually is that the individual student does certain things. He says, "Okay, I want to study this little unit on space science," and it probably takes him two or three weeks. So he does that and as he goes through it he takes tests and those tests are marked on cards and the cards are then mailed or hand-carried or fed in somehow later to the computer. The computer scores them and gives you back an answer and as a result of that says, "Hey, you did very well. You got 97 on that test and why don't you go on and look at chapter 13, and look at film strip No. 12, listen to tape No. 4 and when you get through that, take another test and feed that back in." So that's kind of a computer-managed instruction, where you're not talking directly to the computer, but it's more of an instruction process.

Question:

Do you think an Indian school like we're talking about could be set up?

Answer:

The impression I got was that this might take a long time and you're not sure it really can be done. Is that what you're saying? That may be true. It depends on a lot of things. Let me say that it can be done. It's possible to do; it depends who wants to do it and how much they want to do it. I suspect it will be done. The things I'm talking about are not futuristic, they're not pie in the sky. They're not 50 or 200 years away. I'm talking about things that are now being done in some combination, some place in the world. I'm not talking about speculations. Computers are working today, television is working today, overhead projectors and film strips and individualized instruction are working today -- now -- and have been last year and the year before. So you know it's possible

If you're talking about other questions, such as, "Where does one get the money to do this?", that is a serious problem and probably you can't do a good deal of it until you have some commitment from somebody with money. I think you can do some of it without money. You can certainly start it, if that's what you want to do. I'm really trying to hedge and not suggest what you should do, because I don't think that's my place. I'm trying to offer what may be alternatives, that you can think about as you go about making your decisions. If I were to start a school for a group of people and started working on it tomorrow, I believe it could be done.

I think you people can do the same thing. I don't have any special knowledge more than anybody else, but I believe it can be done.

Can I go back to this question about individualized instruction a little bit? A number of persons in the last five years or so have been very concerned about what's come to be called "individualized instruction". The major word, the key word of individualized instruction, is options or choices, and these are student options or student choices. Sort of imagine a wall of pigeon holes or mail boxes where there are different learning packages, and there are hundreds of them, maybe thousands of them. Now I don't mean it has to take that physical format, it doesn't have to be that physical, but just for the moment visualize a whole bunch of little cubby-holes where an individual student can go with some assistance -- from a teacher or a guidance person (or perhaps you'd even like to consider him a coach rather than some person who stands up and lectures) -- somebody who works with students to try to help advise them or guide them about possibilities of what to choose, what things to follow, should A follow B or should B follow C.

If you kind of envision that, then students can have the option to go and select from, you know, box No. 73, some material about a certain subject. It might be about chemistry, it might be about social studies, it might be about the French Revolution or whatever it is that particular student wants to study at the time. The student can take that material and sit down with it and he can work alone, or with one or two or three or four or five or twelve students, and go through a set of materials which has options within it. You can either read about these materials in this text book, or you can look at that movie, or you can go look at this video tape -- all three have the same information -- of if you want to you can do all three. You don't have to do just one. They are there, and you know about them because you have a card or a piece of paper or whatever that says these are the kinds of things you need to know if you want to know about whatever it is, the French Revolution, space science, or whatever it is. Not all students have to study the French Revolution, or space science, or whatever it is you're studying, at the same time. Nor do they all have to take the same amount of time studying it. We're not necessarily talking about how much time it takes, we're talking about what kind of learning.

Question:

What about tests?

Answer:

There are various tests that go with that package. As you go along every so much amount of information (and they keep it fairly small), there's a small test at each end which is to test that material. One of the things that disturbs me a great deal is that most of the school systems test students not with malice, but tests are built on trickery. Teachers usually trick students and they don't mean to be tricky about it, it's just that it happens. They're not necessarily nasty, but it happens. Teachers will very often say, "All right, now let's take a test on this which is a little different from that," because they don't really want to give you tests on that. They want to understand your transfer of learning or how much you can assimilate out of it. Well, maybe that has a place at some point but it strikes me that it would be a lot more straight-forward, honest, and fair if we say, "Hey, let's learn this and having learned this, now let's take a test to see _if_ we learned this, and not take a test on something else." So you can build in little tests along the way.

Let me go back just for illustration. Let's assume that something was going to take the average student maybe five hours -- it might be all five hours in one day or it might be five hours over a week. Let's assume it takes him five hours on the average to complete this set of things. About maybe every twenty minutes or so of work that he put in on that, he'd have a little type of quiz thing, to make sure that he was understanding the material, and if he hasn't gotten that point, then he stops right there. He doesn't go any further. He goes back until he gets that one, because that may be important for the next one. We're not interested in how much time he spends, or did he sit with a class or did he bring a book home. We're interested in did he learn that thing.

Question:

Who makes him stop and go back?

Answer:

It's a self-discipline and regimentation. That's up to the student. Student education, in the final analysis, is always his own anyhow. You can stick anybody of any age into any situation and he's going to do what he wants to do whether you like it or not. He's either going to learn or he's not going to learn and if he decides he's going to turn it off, man, he's turned it off! Forget it. You're not going to reach him.

Question:

What happens to group testing?

Answer:

Group testing doesn't perform any particular useful function. So that's not necessary, in my view, but you can do it. If you decide you want to, at the beginning of every year, the middle of every year, give everybody some kind of test you made up because you think it's important to give them a test, you can do that. We usually do that now, although we don't mean anything, but we do it. As far as grades go, there are a number of ways of making up grades and that's a difficult area to play with because you have to set your value system up. It depends what you, as people in a given situation, want. What do you want to know about student performances? What do you want to know about how much they've learned? And very often that's a combination of a parent situation, where the parent wants to know how well his kid is doing in school, so he shouldn't be ashamed or maybe he could be proud, or even hit the kid over the head or something. He wants to know what the kid is doing, if he's not wasting his time, if he's not fooling around and if he's getting an education.

But the grades don't necessarily tell him that. The grades are usually compared with somebody else's. Freddie did a little better than Johnny, so give Freddie an "A-" and give Johnny only a "B+". It's not terribly important. What is important, and you can set up grading systems very easily for this, is how much the students learn. Did they learn their package or not? If they learn it, give them credit for it, and that's that. You can set it up and say, "Have you learned about the French Revolution?" He passed the test, he didn't flunk. You don't really care what his number grade is. You can set it up any way you want. You can say, "He must pass it by 80%, being able to answer 80% of the questions, or he doesn't pass." As soon as he passes with 80% of the questions or better, he's passed. Do you need to know whether he had an A- or B+? That depends on your filing system. I don't know how to split this; we always look for some way to classify the grades, to pigeon-hole things so we can understand them. That's a convenience and that's after the fact. That question is -- what are you going to impose on an individualized instructional system in order to inform other people, and that's a different question, because that's an extra imposition. You're imposing something from outside. That does not affect the way that the system internally works.

Question:

How do you see this individualized instruction in this case? What I mean is, I'm a student. I don't know at what point I am and what package to take.

Answer:

That's a good question. There has to be a system. What you can call entry points, as well as exit points, and the question is: How do you know where the student is at any given time? Not so much because you want to know, but for him to know. And you can do that in a number of ways. One of the obvious ways is to have pre-tests, or entry tests, so-called. You can also have all sorts of generalized tests, so you can build very easily and quite quickly a fully accurate profile of where the student is, in any combination of things. You can say, in math, he is about here, in reading he is about here and in social studies, or whatever you want to call it, he is about here and in science he is about here. So you can build that sort of profile. If you build an individualized kind of system, totally or partially, then you have the ability to say to the student, "Young man, you know what your problems are. You know what you're doing. You know where you are in each of these areas. What are you going to do about it?" Not, "I am the teacher and I demand that you learn something tomorrow," but "Your problem is in this area. Can I help you? Where do you want to go? These possibilities are there if you want to take advantage of them."

Question:

Who should make decisions about the school?

Answer:

It's a good point and I'm very sympathetic. I think that the decisions internally of what the student learns and when and how are largely up to the students. I think probably, in the final analysis and especially for young children, that the decision of what kind of school and how to go about it and whether or not to try to get money for it and so on would probably be the decision of the parents, too. I think, now I may be wrong, included in that is also the decision of whether or not the parents or the older people are in fact going to include the younger people in the planning, in the decisions, in the operation, in the running of it. I'm certainly in no position to make that decision. That's for the students to decide.

Question:

Do you know anywhere in Canada or the United States where the government is sharing the cost of a student-run school situation?

Answer:

No, I don't.

Question:

What would teachers do if instruction is individualized?

Answer:

The question is, what emphasis or what combination of energy would you place on opportunities for students to discuss with students and students to discuss with a teacher (or some kind of resource person) and what kind of proportion of energy or time would you put on the student working directly with materials, books, or films, or whatever. I really don't mean to hedge your question but I think that the proportions vary according to the situation. I can visualize one extreme (I wouldn't suggest that all students would do this) but one extreme that would be possible, if an individual were interested in operating this way, would be for a student to go through an entire educational system almost alone. That's one extreme. It would be possible for him to go through just the sets of materials, get the kind of learning he wants and be very successful at it. On the other extreme, it would be possible probably for a student to go through that sort of learning, pass all tests or whatever things you want to put up as evaluation, without having done any or much of the individual learning. My guess is that most students will end up going through the materials at their own pace and according to their own interests, constantly forming and breaking up and reforming groups of students and teachers who have similar interests at that time. So that maybe five, or six, or twenty-three, or whatever, students will get together because they're at about the same level and have the same interests and will work together until that particular thing is completed in that particular area, say mathematics. At the same time they may be working completely individually in science. At the same time they may be working with a different group in social studies. So groups will constantly reform and it is primarily up to the student as to which combination he sees and he chooses.

Question:

Do I understand that this system you're referring to has just started, or is it in full swing somewhere in the U.S.?

Answer:

There are a number of places in the U.S. where some portions of this are going on, and in some cases almost all of it is going on as a system. For example, one of them is at the University of Pittsburgh Research and Development Center. They call it I.P.I., "Individually Prescribed Instructions". This a primarily for the elementary school level. They have materials in four or five subject areas and they're creating new ones in other areas. They have materials in mathematics; they have materials in reading. This is for little kids, in grades one to six. They have materials in social studies; they have materials in science. It's not all completed yet but in those areas for six years the students were able to go at their own pace. They have options of what materials they would choose and, depending on how well they performed, suggestions that they may go back and do that again, in a different way, or go on to here, and they can choose among these options.

Question:

Can you get information on this through the University of Pittsburgh?

Answer:

Yes, the University of Pittsburgh is working in close cooperation with another organization in Philadelphia which is called "Research for Better Schools". They are a regional educational laboratory. They are taking the I.P.I. system from Pittsburgh and they are now trying it out on something like 35 or 40 schools around the Pennsylvania area, and they also have some schools out in California with whom they're working, and now they're working with some in the Northwest. There are a number of places where this is going on. As I said earlier, I have been talking about things that are happening today and yesterday and last week and last year. I'm not talking about things twenty years in the future. This kind of an operation, or some variation, is in operation in many places.

Question:

What name is this system called?

Answer:

I.P.I. in this case -- "Individually Prescribed Instructions". There are other schools and other colleges who are working on similar kinds of things around the country. I have a group in Washington, D.C., who's working with a county in the state of Maryland, doing a similar kind of thing on the high school level with chemistry, French, and geometry. They're also doing similar things at the college level with physics. Those things can be done.

Question:

Do you think that individualized instruction will become more common?

Answer:

Yes. I feel, for a whole set of reasons, this will become more and more the way in which schools are organized and run. For a whole set of reasons: Number one, it takes good advantage of technology; Number two, it really does give students a choice. The students who work in this situation will not go back to the other situation. They really want it. They really get excited about it. You take the kids, and you give them a chance to explore and do their own things -- to learn what is their interest -- they really get turned on and they do it. And then you try to set them back in a situation like we have here, where somebody is talking to somebody; and, you know, they just can't stand it! They go like crazy in it. I was involved in a setting up of the Job Corps about five years ago in the U.S. That's part of the "War on Poverty". We set up a similar kind of learning system within the Job Corps which was used extensively in about 100 rural conservation camps, so-called, and most of the contractor-operated camps used also similar, but different, things. In the conservation centers, and in many of the contractor-operated centers, they achieved some fantastic grades and scores. By definition, they were working with kids who were 16 to 21 years old, who had failed in the school system, who had "dropped out", or been pushed out, or whatever -- kids who came from a poverty background, kids who were supposed to be, by definition, failures. They placed these kids in this camp. The kids volunteered to go to the camps and many of them gained as much as three- or four-year scores in reading, mathematics and in some other areas in a matter of six months. Now there were some that continued to be failures, but a lot of them that were labelled failures weren't failures at all. When they got a system that they could get a hold of, and they could learn from, they got turned on by it. They showed that they really could do the stuff and they could learn.

Question:

With this learning, you can go as fast as you want?

Answer:

Yes, you can go as fast as you want. In fact, the real problem when you give students an opportunity to learn at their own rate, is that they gobble up the material so fast you can't keep ahead of them. You can't produce new material fast enough. One of the solutions to this problem is to engage the students in developing materials, which they like to do and they do a good job. Very often the students do a better job than the teachers in developing material. They research it more thoroughly and they look at it through a different set of eyes. They have more energy.

The way the questions are going it seems that the older ones have all the questions. I'm wondering if the young students are not interested enough to ask any questions.

I think there's still a lot of misunderstanding as far as the young students are concerned. They still don't understand what this is all about. These people here, are here to give us some information. They don't want to go to school. It's just to get the thing started -- the school itself.

Would you like to ask any questions? If you have any questions, don't be shy.

When he had finished answering questions, Mr. Gillis and the young people moved into the adjoining room for a discussion. However, Mr. Gillis had to leave Memremcook as the group broke for dinner, after which the young people resumed their session. Richard Laughing, a Mohawk from St. Regis Reservation in New York, came to the conference with Ernest Benedict, director of the North American Indian Travelling College. During the afternoon session he remained with the young people and answered questions about his experiences at the Haskell Institute, an all-Indian school in Kansas. These discussions were not tape recorded. However, large charts were kept which outlined the discussion as it progressed. The statements the Indian young people made about education and about what a school for Indians should be like are listed below.

Some thoughts about present schools - because of transportation problems, you can't take part in school activities; for an Indian, school is just work -- transportation problems prevent you from staying after school for extra help -- right away you are subject to criticism and ridicule -- I don't think integration causes drop outs -- white schools are based on competition -- you should go to school to learn, not to compare -- I don't like integrated schools -- it depends on the area you are in -- in history books, Indians are savages -- it depends on the attitude of each person; if you are ashamed, it will bother you -- Indian students are more mature than the white students in the same class; they know more about life -- you are not allowed to speak your own language -- if you want an education, you will learn, you will pay any price, even your pride -- this world is about competition.

Teachers - a teacher should give encouragement -- should be available -- should give advice from his past experience -- should help you with your work -- should act like a human being -- students should have respect for teachers -- lots of times teachers pretend they are superior, God or something -- teachers are our equals -- teachers are superior -- should not play parent role -- should not be a seargent -- no lining up -- teacher should teach you as a person -- teachers are old-fashioned -- take sides -- prejudiced -- puritanical -- they are afraid to say what something means -- they try to make Indians think like whites -- if you can't stand a teacher, you form a mental block -- students should be able to evaluate teachers -- should have more than one teacher teaching each subject to get different points of view.

Indian subjects - teach Indian culture -- separate the different tribes -- you should learn you own culture in particular and also about other Indians in general -- your language is part of your culture, you live your culture -- Indian rights should be taught so we know where we stand -- should study Indian act, treaties, history -- Indian art should be taught, modern Indian art.

Classes, courses, grades - you should have certain subjects at certain hours, like in college, and just have to be at class for the subjects you are taking -- should be able to choose your own subjects -- there should be a guidance councellor -- should take subjects that interest you -- should have to take some compulsory subjects, like choose six out of ten -- there should be report cards -- use credit system -- should be adult education at night -- should be able to take subjects that allow you to go on to the university -- should have big choice of subjects to take -- the school should allow you to change your mind -- there should be post-graduate courses -- if you want to learn without competition, should be a pass-fail system of grading.

Discipline - it is wrong that the principle has all the power and the school board is right behind him -- the teachers and students should make the rules together for the good of the majority -- should have open court, some neutral way.

Should a new school have all Indian teachers and students? - if you have white students it will create problems for them -- previous schools have been planned by just a certain group of whites; the present schools don't work for a lot of white students -- if you kept whites out, you would get bad reactions from them -- we have been joining them too long, let them join us -- some want all Indian -- should have anyone who is qualified for a teacher -- you wouldn't have so many drop-outs in an all-Indian school -- should be Indian planned and operated.

TUESDAY NIGHT, JULY 15

On Tuesday most of the representatives from the Union of New Brusnwick Indians had to fly to Winnepeg for an emergency meeting of the Canadian

National Indian Brotherhood to discuss Cretien's policy statement on Indian affairs. As a result, the planning committee was now almost completely young people, as it remained for the rest of the week. The Tuesday session had left everyone relaxed. So, it was decided to try the same format again -- but to separate the adults and young people from the beginning, to video-tape the session, and to show it to the adults in another room. The planning committee also felt that there was something of a generation gap between the younger and older young people. Therefore, it was decided to divide the morning's discussion group in two -- 17 and older in one, 16 and younger in the other. For the afternoon a discussion with Indian students, attending a workshop on Indian culture at the University of Moncton, was planned.

On Sunday and Monday nights there had been a little Indian dancing and a record hop, but Tuesday was the real beginning of the social events. Tuesday night a band from Big Cove Micmac Reserve performed and again Wednesday night. Except for a few record hops, all the entertainment of the conference was provided by Indians. Every night Ernest Benedict and Richard Laughing, both Mohawk, from the North American Indian Travelling College led Indian dancing and singing, and also showed several movies. As the week progressed, Indian dancing became more and more popular.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16

The first speaker was Gerry Gambill. Mr. Gambill worked as a community development worker at St. Regis Mohawk Reserve in Ontario and Quebec until he was removed by the Indian Affairs Branch in 1967. He then was district director for the Company of Young Canadians. He is presently teaching at the Antioch College Graduate School in Putney, Vermont. Mr. Gambill also provided free video-taping services at the conference.

Previous speakers have been speaking because they have been experts on some thing or another. What I'm going to give you is not anything that I'm an expert about but is just my own opinion. A lot of what I'll say will be controversial and many of you will disagree and some of you will agree and so on. I think that if there is some controversy it will be good. I get the feeling from listening to people talk that the kids who have dropped out of school, but you know maybe that is not quite right and maybe being a drop out isn't such a good idea, so I'd like to give the other point of view, and that is the point of view that the guys who have dropped out of school over the years should all be given medals. That the people who have dropped out of school have over the years have been the people who have kept Indian communities going and Indian communities alive. The Indians who have gotten good education, et cetera, have not been any good to their people at all. There's a good reason for that when you stop to think about it.

Mr. Bourque says that the people who come to the adult education classes here, in one year achieve a grade 9 level. People who can't read and write come here, they study and after a year they can pass their exams for grade 9. Well, now kids who start in kindergarten and go grades 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 have spent 9 years doing something else. It only takes one year to learn what they've learned. (Now that's something else if they've learned). You stop and think about your own education and most of the time that's spent in school is not spent on giving you knowledge, but is spent in changing you as people. You are taught to sit straight, keep quiet, put your hand up when you want to do something, listen to the teacher, raise your hand if you have to go to the bathroom, don't question your teachers authority, be on time, be there right at 9:00 in the morning, wear certain kinds of clothes, speak a certain kind of language, do certain kinds of things. So that's what most of your education has been about. It has not been to give your certain amounts of knowledge. This means that in your new school it doesn't matter if you change the content of your education, it doesn't matter if you change the kind of information that you're given. But if you go through this same process, when you come out at the end you don't have Indians that come out at the end. What you have is people who know about Indians, but were not Indians. You have people who know about Indian crafts but are not Indian craftsmen, because the kind of socialization, the kind of education that you're given in schools is the kind of education that equips you essentially to work and to work in various strange types of situation where you have to be to work at 9:00. You have to respect your boss, you have to be neat in your work or you don't question what the company does, or you aren't a part of something big, but you do little small kinds of jobs. This is really what it's all about.

There's a number of myths, or falsehoods about education that most of you have been taught to believe. One of them that you have been taught to believe is that if you get a good education you'll get a good job. This is not necessarily true. One of the things that's been happening here is that all the time the qualifications for the jobs are changing. Now in order to get a job as a garbage collector you have to have a high school education. What happens is that education has been used as a gate or a control and whenever you get too many people for a particular kind of job all they have to do is raise the qualifications and what a lot of Indian people have found out, a lot of Black people have been finding out, a lot of Puerto Ricans have been finding out, was that they have done all the right things, they've gone through school, they've been good kids, they've gotten a good education, but when they get out the jobs just aren't there for them. So that is one of the myths: that if you get a good education that you'll have a good job. This is not necessarily true - some people will, not all of you.

Another method you've been taught to believe is that your education should enable you to get ahead. You as an individual are taught a lot about competition, you're taught that you've got to keep ahead of the other guy. You've got to be smart, you've got to keep on top of things, you've got to work your way up the ladder. Part of the strength of Indian communities over the years have been a fact that it is a community. It is a group of people. A group of people that when anything happens to the outside, they stick together and they work together. So with whatever kind of education that you think about getting, you should think about an education not for yourself as individuals, not so that you can get ahead, but that all the people can get ahead, so that everyone in the community can profit by what happens.

You've also been taught that if you're going to do anything very complex in this very complicated world you've got to stick to an education for a long period of time. This is not true either. (They've found that you can bring, well in fact they've done it). They brought Eskimos down from the Arctic, people who don't know how to read or write or anything. They came down and they wanted to teach them to be jet engine mechanics and they found that within three months, without any teaching that the Eskimos are the best mechanics on the lot. They still don't know how to read or write. Why? Because they haven't gone through all this process of deadening your curiosity. The process that has taught you to respect the teacher instead of respecting what's happening inside of you. They found that when there is a time of war and they need a lot of men to operate the big guns and to learn how to do very complex things and how to operate computors, they take people right off the streets and give them a very intensive education and in a short period of time, a matter of months they're able to do this. They take people and they teach them how to speak Russian or how to speak Vietnamese or how to speak any kind of language. They do this in 2 or 3 months. It does not take a long period of time, as you might think, to learn particular skills. The idea that you've got to go through these things step by step is not necessarily true and you're only taught that so that you'll stay in a very expensive kind of baby sitting service that tends to separate you from your families, because that's the main functions schools are now having.

A long time ago the task of education was to enable man to service against the hostile environment to learn how to eat, how to get shelter, how to have clothes and these kinds of things. But there's another kind of world too; that's the social world. The world of other people that are around you. The task of survival that you have, particularly that you have as Indians is just as crucial as the task of the cave man in surviving against the physical world because you have a hostile social world that you've got to survive against and it's just as critical as having to worry about what you're going to eat and what's going to happen to you. The hostile social world does not threaten your survival as human beings but it does threaten your survival as Indians. Education used to lie in the control of communities and at one time things we taught mother to daughter, father to son; but as things became more complex, certain people in the community specialized in education and became teachers. There wasn't anything wrong with that so long as they didn't feel they owned education, that they owned knowledge and they controled what you were going to learn, because that was something that the communities did. But what's happened now is that the control of education is not in the control of communities. The control of education is in the control of people who have a great amount of power. The people that sit on the school board make the laws, own the companies, print the text books, and own the television stations are not the people who necessarily have the interest of the community at heart. What they have at heart is that they'll stay on the school board, that they'll stay as owners of a T.V. station, that they'll stay as people in control in the legislatures, that's what they have at heart. And so what they want is people who will come to the school system and not ask too many questions and who will work hard, who will sort of come to work at 9:00 every morning, who won't misbehave in any kind of a way. In particular people who will allow them to stay in the jobs that they have.

Well, even if this worked, even if it doesn't sound so good, but it worked, maybe it would be a good idea: but the fact is it isn't working and if you read the newspapers what do you find? You find that the kids on the college campuses are all rebelling, they're saying that their education does not mean anything to them. You read the papers about what's happened in the cities, you find that there are riots, rebellions of all kinds, all kinds of problems, crime on the streets, the legislators down in Albany can't even go from the Capital Building to their parking lot without getting mugged. In New York city alone, last month, there were over a 100 people who died of heroin addiction. A 100 people in one city in one month. This is not an unusual thing. So that this system is not working.

Question:

What do you think our new school should be like?

Answer:

I almost hesitate to answer the question because I think the answer to that has got to come from the young people that are here. Let me just say some of the things that it shouldn't be. I don't think it should be something that separates people from their families, it should be something that makes families stronger. It should concentrate on the experiences that the people have, the school should be happy, it should be fun, it should be a place where people have good experiences where they develop good memories, they have good times. This is what makes good people. And along the way they should also learn certain kinds of skills and knowledge. But any of you who want to go out and learn how to program a computer, you can go get a course in that that will do it in 3 or 4 months, you don't have to have a school that takes 10 years to do it. If you want to learn how to operate a machine, to make tools and dyes, to learn how to type, to learn how to drive heavy construction equipment and so on, there are very good shcools that can do that in a very short period of time. Your school doesn't necessarily have to have all of this. What you have to have is a school that turns out people who still are curious, who still want to learn, who still have very active minds, who are very strong, healthy people. I mean like emotionally. These are the kind of people that will continue to get an education in these very specialized kinds of things.

Question:

Won't we have to go out in the white world to earn a living?

Answer:

That's a good question. You see it's the kind of education that your're going to get. Indians are going to remember that they're Indians and the communities can be strong. I think that Indian communities can be strong enough that there is not the complete amount of reliance, the dependance that there is right nowon white communities. Right now, almost always, I bet 90% of the Indians in this country if they want to get a good job have to go away from home to get it. Not only a good job but if they even want to support their families they've got to go away from home to do that. So the idea would be to develop people who are educated to develop the economics of their own communtiies so that you don't have to have the men leaving all the time, because this weakens a community.

The kind of education that the people are getting is not necessarily preparing them to be good strong people. You only need to look around the countryside and to see the pollution and wonder how long that's going to last. To look at the air over the cities and wonder how long that's going to last. If this is what a civilization of educated people are doing, of people who are the products of the school systems, then I think you have a question the school system itself and the whole purposes of education.

I don't know whether you know it or not but in the old Indian Act, the Canadian Indian Act up until 1951, that any Indian who got an education automatically ceased to be an Indian, that Indians who got a college degree, became a lawyer, became a preacher, stopped being an Indian, and no longer had any Indian rights. If you read all the material Indian Affairs has been putting out you will see it has placed all of its hopes for the integration and the assimilation of the Indian people on education. Over 50% of the budget of Indian Affairs is spent on education. It makes you stop and think exactly what they wanted, particularly since the Canadian government is now proposing legislation that abolishes Indians. If you've been reading your newspaper, you know that the Canadian government has said within 5 years there will be no such thing anymore as a person who is an Indian, you'll all be Canadians. There will be no such land as Indian Reserves; it will just be ordinary land. This is what the Government has said and this is what the whole controversy is about. The reason that the Government feels that they can say this at this point in time is that they think that there are enough Indians who have been educated. Now if you think about that, maybe the statement that I made about the people who have dropped out should all get medals, may make a little more sense.

I think that your task here is to determine what you want, you as young people, you as people who are going to be in control of your communities in the very near future. What kind of person do you want an Indian to be? What kind of a man? What kind of a woman? What will his values be? What will his communities be like? How will he get along with other people? When you determine the kind of man that you want the Indian to be, then think of the kinds of things that children should learn and the kinds of experiences that they should have so that they will become that kind of people. When you think about that, you'll have your school designed. What you need then is not necessarily a school but a way of growing up. How should you grow up? How should Indian kids grow up, so that they'll be that kind of person? I hope that when the 21st century rolls around when you are about 40 or 45 years old that there will be some very strong communities, that will be very Indian and that there will be a lot of people who will be turning to those communities for advise and information. You're finding that already. A lot of young people are looking to the Indians for information about how to survive. Even educated young people, people who have gone through college. Look at the clothes they're starting to wear, Indian style-life. And I think that you're going to find that the Indian communities are going to be the places that a lot of white people are going to come to to study the ways of how they can make their white communities stronger, better and they're only going to be able to do that if there are any Indians left. And whether there are any left is going to be determined a lot by your success in the kind of educational program that you're planning. So that's all I have to say; as I say it's only opinion, but if there are any questions that you have about that, I'll be glad to answer the questions or argue with you about it or whatever you would like to do.

Question:

Why does the Indian drop out?

Answer:

The tradedy is not the people who have dropped out. The tradedy is that you don't have anything decent to drop out into. The tragedy is that there isn't a good Indian education available to the people who have dropped out. That's the tragedy, now you look around right not. John Cretien, the Minister of Indian Affairs has stood up a month ago almost now, and said he's going to abolish Indians and abolish Indian Reserves. Where have the education Indians been in speaking out against that. The people that have spoken out against it that have made all the "fighting the battle", are not the educated Indians. The educated Indians have become educated so much that they don't know how to fight back against us. They're too much a part of the system.

Question:

Being an Indian seems to have disadvantages because like last year, I was bored and I went back to school. I was out of school for 5 years and I went back, it seemed there was a bit of prejudice. Why?

Answer:

It's a hard question to answer. I can answer the question why, because one of the things is the way that they have been educated to feel.

And they consider themselves educated people, respectful people.

After Mr. Gambill's talk the young people split up into two different age groups to talk about what an Indian school should be like. Neither meetings were recorded, but as on the day before, large charts were kept. Some of the ideas discussed by the older group were:

> The school should take students around to many different types of reservations to teach the general idea about Indians and their cultures - the school should teach your Indian language, religion should be taught, there should be no age limit on students but they should be going into at least 9th grade work - parents should have something similar to PTA - the relations between parents, teachers and students should be kept up.

Some of the younger groups ideas were:

> Students should not be allowed to cut classes; if you choose your own subjects, you should not be bored - you should be able to change courses any time during the year - the teachers should be mostly Indians - no one should be kicked out of school for breaking some rule; there can be other punishments. There should be a school nurse, doctor, and psychologist - should have a young principle - pay students to do janitoring - the school should be open for 10 months every year - only four hours of classes each day - have a student monitor in each classroom - some of the subjects should be: algebra, psychology, public speaking, self defense (boxing and wrestling), home economics and shop for both boys and girls, music, modern band, ballet, student run bank as part of the commercial course, mechanical drawing.

Wednesday Afternoon, July 16th

After dinner the students and teachers from the Indian Cultural Workshop at the University of Moncton showed up for a panel discussion. Everyone got together in the main room; from then on the young people and adults no longer split into separate groups. As it turned out, no panel was formed, but rather a debate started up between the Moncton students and the Memremcook participants. Several of the students from Moncton felt that having a school mostly for Indians would be bad for the students because they had to learn how to make a living in the White man's world. The Memremcook participants had been considering this problem since the beginning of the week. The discussion moved freely over a number of subjects, including assimilation, Cretien's policy statement, Indian history, and so on. It is unfortunate that there were no tapes made, because during this session many of the young people had a chance to sharpen their ideas about what an Indian school should be like and what it should do.

On Thursday, July 17, 1969, Ernest Benedict, the Director of the North American Indian Traveling College, suggested some ideas about how the school could work:

Imagine going into the school. There are two or three rooms and a different sign over each door. One sign says MicMacs, another says Maliseets, another says, oh, Carwash, or anything, anykind of labels, or you can call yourself American Telegram or Telegraph or whatever. Inside these rooms, a MicMac room, the teacher will say, "Welcome to the tribe. From now on, you are going to operate as a tribe, you are going to learn how to live, you're going to learn what makes a tribe operate, you're going to have to make this a growing and an operating venture." Well how do you do it? Well you're going to have to start off speaking your language, you might have to branch off speaking some other languages. You may have to learn background, that would be history. You'd have to make this thing economically possible; so how do you do that? You have to go look for industries, you have to go look for work. Where would you go and look for work? Any on the reserve? Well all these, I think can be studied even very young, if the teachers or the group leaders are really on the ball. And one can teach one another in a situation like that. The older ones can help the younger ones with simple things. In that room you'd have to learn economics; you'd have to learn social studies; you'd have to learn languages; you'd have to learn how to write a letter to type to various firms and well these things. This is the plan, there are others, one is that the school itself can be set up in such a way that it would have a number of facilities there, ready and open any time. The parents that have children that want to learn something bring their children there or they can even participate in the teaching of the children. The things are all there in the school. The instructors or some directors are available there. And the parent will say, "This child needs a grade 1 education - he should know how to read and write, would you help me?" Everybody in the community, can be involved in this. They can teach the children from 6 years old right up through anyone - even old people can learn in that situation. If you have enough of the facilities, the tools and the books and all that knowledge that is needed by the community, you just have to have the initiative, you have to have the desire to go there and learn and as long as you're learning, you can make your own decision as to how fast you go. Maybe I have given you some other ideas that so far have not even been considered. If you're going to start off new, you should think up new ideas and teaching methods too as well as having a new building.

A discussion followed on boredom. Someone asked a question about what students can do about boring teachers.

A Student:

They should be able to do something about it. If a teacher is going to be teaching me against my intentions, I listen to him, and then all of a sudden it turns me off like I'm sitting there, and he's mumbling something and I'm trying to get this information from him and I can't get it and he looks at the students and he shys away, he can't speak up. He keeps his feelings in. If I want to learn, I want him to be agressive to speak out.

Question:

In this other school we're talking about, would it be the students responsibility to do something about it?

A Student:

It depends how many students are bored. If there's 1 or 2, it's probably the student not the teacher that's at fault, but if it's the whole group; if 30 or 40% of the class or even 50%, well then it has to be the teacher's fault.

Another Student:

Well then it should be the students, it's them, their learning. The teacher is supposed to be teaching them, and if he isn't, well then the students have to do something about it.

Another Student:

When you have a bunch of students in a class, they're going to have to keep some kind of quota or something, to know how those students are doing, you know their averages. If they're coming along good or if they are doing bad, to find out how come they're doing bad. If they're doing good, great - then the teachers are doing their job and the students are listening. But if there's something wrong, if the students are lagging behind, like they are bored, they can't stand the teachers, if he's up there, mumbling to himself, there should be a change.

Norman Bourque, one of the directors of the Memremcook Institute, commented:

One of the things you've been doing is investigating techniques on what is Indian Education, and now you are studying what you just mentioned: boredom. There is only one person speaking. But there are approximately 140 ears in this room.

I received an indication that gave me some insight on how to speak, on how to see, but there's nobody that has given a course on how to listen.

There's not a school that gives a course on how to listen but everyone wants to learn how to speak.

Boredom is a big word.

A Student:

Well that's why we want an Indian-run school. Teaching is done in different ways; there are different methods of looking at things, different methods of teaching - you have a chance to overcome this bordom.

N. Bourque:

I know we teach the upgraders here and we spent approximate 3 months in trying to determine how to work , trying to giv them an idea of how to learn, because we felt that if we taught a person how to learn, then he would be set for life on getting an education because it's the same problem. I not only think that an education is a lifelong process but I think that education is life.

A Student:

I said we're going to need some professional help from professional people to see how we are going to get some funds to help us start what we want to start our new High School. You know, we could do it ourselves, but we don't know how to go about it and if we get some help from Institutions, from Foundations from different parts of this country, then we're all set.

A Student:

It's going to be our school with our own ideas of how to go about it. We're going to set it up without any ties from the Government or from any other one from any sort and so we'll be an independent school that way, and we'll have our own staff, our own teaching faculty, our own sport like in competition with other High Schools, and we'll compete in sports and things like that and we're going to have all this and it will be our school, for our own education, for our own history, for our own culture, for us.

A Student:

Is the school going to be on a tuition basis or what? How is the school going to be run?

A Student:

Probably the Government will have to support us, they do with other schools and I don't see anything wrong with this school.

A Student:

There are a lot of colleges in the States, they get grants from the United States Government for education, that doesn't mean the United States Government controls all these colleges. Same thing in Canada, the Canadian Government gives out funds to these colleges to keep them going, it doesn't mean he controls them.

Jerry Gambill:

About one hundred years ago the government of Canada felt that the answer to the whole Indian situation was to build Agricultural Institutes and they built them across the country. They build some here in the Maritimes, in Saskatchewan, they're all over the place. Indian people went there, Indian young people. At these Institutes, things didn't go well and the people who came out of them were not good people and the whole thing turned into a miserable mess, and now, most of these Institutes have long since been closed. I'm wondering what the discussions were at that time amongst Indian people. Whether they said we've got bad Agricultural Institutes so let's design a good Indian Agricultural Institute, or whether they began to think of other solutions. I've heard a lot of talk about Indian teachers, White teachers, Indian advisors, White advisors, but I haven't heard any talk about Indian teachings and White teachings and I am wondering if there is a difference between Indian advice and white advice. Whether it is possible to get white advice from Indians and Indian advice from Whites. The last thing that I just have in the back of my mind and really may not have anything to do with the discussion is this. If you drive down a highway and you see a sign that says historical monument and you stop to read the monument and it says: "Here there were 300 Indian people" and you drive a little further down the road and you see a sign that says this, we wonder, you know, when we read American History, where are the Pequots, Wampanoags, Mohegans, where are all these people, where have they gone. And when you look at a map of the Maritimes, you see all kinds of places where it says Indian Reserve. When you go there, there is no Indian, just trees. I'm wondering what the school you're proposing has to do with that, whether in 1980, the graduates of their school will be taking their children back to a place that says "Big Cove" you know once Indians lived there.

A Student:

You know I think that is what Earnie Benedict tried to get at. And I had a question written down here. "How much is a school for your education, as an individual to get along with the world?" And how much is a school going to be for an education for you as a member of your tribe, for you and your tribe to get along in the world?"

A Student:

No matter how much Indian culture or Indian history or whatever you can never leave out the Europeanism of the White man's race. It is never completely forgotten, it's always there because we have lived with it so long; it is part now, you just can't push it aside. It's so much a part of us, so no matter what we are taught in this school, or what our children get taught, there will always be a part of the European civilization.

Mike Mitchell:

Let me clarify that. Yes, we have to live in this society as well as everyone else, but no White man has the right to say, "This is my civilization." We are all changing, everyone else too. Just because I have these clothes on doesn't mean that I'm an Indian. The values and principles of an Indian is something that you have to keep in mind, keep in practice. This is what is important. A White man can go in a school today, and can see Indians. This White man comes out here and says: "Look, you're not an Indian. Look at the way you dress and go to school, this is our way." You can throw that back in his face. You can say to the White man: "This was the teachings of Indians from way back. Indidans developed rubber, and cotton and many other things in this country and Indians invented that system of democracy we live under now, it's all Indians. It's all a part of us. " So when someone says this, you can just tell him right away that a lot of people get the past mixed up with today, and a lot of people have the idea that the White man invented everything in this modern civilization, and a lot of people think that to be an Indian is to wear head dresses and moccasins, but they don't have the whole story. Well, I'll tell you something, that Indians have every right to wear that, that's a part of him.

This is how I'm an Indian even if I have to live in this world. There is no reason why I can't remain what I am, why my kids can't do that. We live in this world today. You start to think now, the French started to make a lot of noise in this country. They finally got somewhere. Now all over the country you have French and English road signs, everything. You have to speak French. They were a minority once too, they were a minority before us. And so at this time and a lot of times they had no right to say: "Listen you are going to go to school. You are going to speak White Man's language. This is all you're going to succeed. That is nothing. You can make the same demands as the Frenchmen have made, as anybody else have made. You have that right, you have more rights than anyone else. You see, they've

pushed and brainwashed us all our lives. But historians are now beginning to admit that we didn't scalp people, burn them at the steak and all this stuff. I'm sure you hear Ray Fadden, he was here before I was. What he said is very true. We have a part in history. At the same time we talk of education and how we can beat this game. We can use that to our own advantage. We don't have to leave our reserves.

After the discussion period ended, a group of students and adults gathered in the main room to write a draft resolution which everyone would vote on the next day. The number in the room changed from 15 to 20 as different people came in to discuss what had been written.

That evening six conference participants - Governor John Stevens, and Wayne Newell (Passamaquoddy), Sharon Perley (Maliseet), Vincent Knockwood (Micmac), Richard Laughing (Mohawk), and Edward Hinckley - were invited to speak on a local panel discussion radio program in Moncton.

After dinner, Mike Mitcheel (Mohawk) from the North American Indian Traveling College started up some Indian dancing. A little later a record hop started up. Then Mr. Benedict and Mr. Mitchell showed a group of movies about Indian culture and Indian rights - including a film about the recent bridge blockade at St. Regis. After the films a bon fire was lit outside and the Indian dancing began again, lasting three hours. Johnny Yesno (Ojibwa) came all the way from Ottawa to do several specialty dances - the eagle dance, hoop dance, a fire-ring dance; he danced a second time Friday morning. Mr. Yesno is the producer of the CBC show Indian Magazine and has starred in several television shows and movies.

REMARKS AND QUESTIONS

by Dillon Platero

Let me give you a very brief background on the Rough Rock Demonstration School and its history. In June of 1966 a group of influencial Navaho people and Dr. Roessel, who was at Arizona State University at the time, decided to try a new approach in Indian education. Never in history have the Navahos been given the opportunity to really demonstrate what they can do with regard to their own education. Rough Rock School was the result of their thoughts and many conferences. Many of the Navaho people, some who do not speak a word of English, became active and involved in the total education program. These are the people who make the decisions and who actually do the work. If you tell me that Indian people, especially one who is not educated, can't teach their children and be an important part of a school, that is not a true answer. They can! They have proven it! Their active participation is an important part of our school program.

Our bilingual program teaches our children both Navaho and English. The first five years of our program is taught in Navaho. However, the first day they come to school we have a structured oral language program so that by the time that our children have completed their five years, they know enough English to get along and progress. The School Board at Rough Rock is made up of seven Navaho people --these Navaho people, five of this group have never gone to school, only two have gone to school, five of them are medicine men. You may wonder how this group can run a school with such a lack of formal education. You may ask, what do they know about finance? What do they know about a dormitory program? What do they know about curriculum? What do they know about selection of teachers? What do they know about planning or organizing a community development program? Stop and think! These people have communicative skills. These people can reason. In fact, they are as intelligent as any other group of people.

When you give the members of our School Board a situation to decide, you must give more details about such subjects as finance, the school budget, and curriculum. However, this group of seven men who do not have a formal education made significant changes in the traditional curriculum as was handed to us by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the public and parochial systems.

We are a community. We have certain things on our minds. If we want a change in curriculum, a change that fits our way of thinking, we go ahead and make this change.

Our School Board members reason that where our children learn English all the time, they forget our "Mother Tongue". At Rough Rock School, our children are learning how to read and write Navaho. But, we want our children to know both languages. We don't want for them to be ashamed that they are Navaho and Indians.

Our children have been forced to learn the white man's history. But what about Navaho history? Should we not learn about ourselves? Some people might say, "Why do we need to teach Navaho history?" The Navaho School Board members say that Navaho culture and history and Navaho language shall be a part of our curriculum because it is important to learn about ourselves. There are many books about the Navaho people. There are many biographies about famous Navahos. And there are many books telling about Navaho life. But all these books are not for Navaho people. These books have been written by non-Navaho people. The Navaho School Board felt that our people did not have enough victories in Navaho history. Every time there was a battle, the Navahos lost. The U.S. Calvary always came out the winner. Our history shows that there have been some victories that the Navahos won. It shows great men amongst the Navaho people. Norbona was one of the great leaders of the Navaho people. Manuleeko was another great leader. In short, we have had many great Navaho leaders, and a great Navaho history. We did not have a written history, just as the non-Indians do about George Washington or Abraham Lincoln; but now we are creating our own books and movies on Navaho history, biographies, and literature, based on our Navaho experience -- designed just for our people.

Ninty-six per cent of the children who come to Rough Rock for their first year do not know how to speak a word of English. Navaho is their only language. This is their mother tongue. What should we do? Should we put Navaho aside? Should we start teaching them in English, a language that is strange to them? Isn't it better to start using Navaho for communication and instructions? Our children start with the Navaho language. Every day they have a drill in Navaho and broaden their knowledge of their language.

Let me give you a few thoughts on how Navaho people, who do not even speak a word of English, are involved in passing on their culture in our school. A Navaho mother and a Navaho father knows a great deal about Navaho history. They know about the many plants, herbs and trees that are used as medicine and as food. We sit down with the parents and talk about their child learning. We do this at their home, if the child comes to school on a day basis. If the child lives at the school, we bring the parents in. We ask the children to name five plants or five herbs used as food, five plants used as medicine. This is part of our science program. The Navaho people know about plants. They know what they are used for. They know the season that they grow. When the children go home and are herding sheep, they collect these plants and they put the plants in a little sack or try to preserve them some way and then talk about them at home with his parents. Now the child brings back to Rough Rock samples of the plants he has gathered and he shares his knowledge with the class -- knowledge he has learned from his parents -- because his parents were involved in teaching him. What does it bring about? The child feels that mother and father has a great deal to contribute to his education. The parent feels that he or she is a part of the total education program for that child. Also the parents can associate themselves with the school that much better and with the School Board, as the group makes policy, hires and fires teachers and staff, approve curriculum, etc.

Now we don't stop there. We have the parents in the classroom. They are teacher's helpers. Many of these parents do not know how to speak a word of English. Each teacher has a parent. In many cases we have Navaho teachers in the classroom and these Navaho teachers work very closely with the mother. The instruction is in Navaho and the mother picks up a great deal so that it's more than a part-time job for a mother. It is an education program. The parents learn a great deal about various subjects along with the child.

Prior to involving the parents in the classrooms, it was said, "I really cannot contribute to the school. I don't even know what to say to my own kid. I don't know what goes on in the classroom. I don't know what goes on in the school. How can I help the school?" But now the parents feel that they can, having had the experience of working in the classroom and in the dormitories. These parents work with the children every day for about three months. This gives them experience and they begin to learn more and more about what goes on. They learn how their child is educated and they become more interested in the quality of education.

At Rough Rock we have an arts and crafts program and in this arts and crafts program the parent as well as the children take part. When you see this program in operation, you see that this is quite different from a conventional-type school.

Our school does not only work with the 400 or 500 kids in the classroom, we go out into the community. The community needs help. What kind of help? This is up to the community to let us know what kind of help it needs. We work in community development, on housing, on out-houses, on getting better stock. In short, we're working in all areas in which the community feels that the school might be helpful. Also, we have a loan program. And there was a great need for it. Rough Rock School is actually the center of activities for the community.

So far, I have talked about how we (Navahos) control our own school in which over 1500 people are involved. The school is working with these 1500 people. It is saying to these people, "This is your school, we want you to take part in our programs." This school fills our needs with a curriculum of Navaho language, Navaho history and Navaho culture. And we have Navaho mothers and fathers helping to teach. They are an important part of the faculty. We are a community school engaged not only in classroom programs but programs which involve community development, recreation and many other things important to our people.

We have a school that is not inferior to the schools run by non-Navahos. Our people feel we run a "first-class" school. From this, you gain confidence. You gain pride which is of utmost importance. I mentioned earlier that in the Bureau, parochial, and public schools, many Navaho kids were thought not to believe in the Navaho way of life. This meant that to be a Navaho was no good. They taught us how to be a white man. Many Navaho kids were actually ashamed of being a Navaho. They didn't want to be seen talking Navaho. They didn't want to point out their mother and father who were sitting in traditional dress. They didn't want to have any Navaho jewelery seen on them. They didn't want to mention having a Navaho ceremony. But now the tide is beginning to change. Many young, well-educated Navaho people, many who do not know how to speak Navaho, are having a new pride in being Navaho. They want to help their people to progress. Our youngsters are now setting their sites on being a part of this total development: being a part of a Navaho people who are doing things for themselves; wanting to develop their reservation; wanting to have better families, a better community, a better Navaho Nation, a better nation. This is beginning to evolve as a result of what we have been doing, at Rough Rock, and the Navaho people themselves.

We have a Navaho Community College, a two-year program. Like Rough Rock, Navaho Community College is controlled by Navahos. The president of the Navaho Community College is a Navaho.

There is a big public school district and traditionally the public schools felt that the Navaho was not ready to take charge of it. Recently, the School Board selected a Navaho to head the Chimley Public School District as its superintendent. A little ways from Chimley, a Navaho was made principal of an elementary school with 600 students. This public school district that I talk about has about 2,500 kids and several schools including a high school and then another school. Also, another Navaho has been appointed principal of a school. We see that people are beginning to put faith in our young educated Navaho people. Our Navahos show their abilities that they are able and are competent to run good schools.

Navaho people are running schools and from an elementary school to a college program. The Navaho people contribute $250,000.00 a year to this college. The Navaho people contribute over

$400,000.00 a year for scholarships to its young people. Every year about a little over 2,000 Navaho students graduate from high school. Right now, we have approximately 1,500 students in colleges and universities. We have approximately 1,000 college graduates. Progress is really being made! What is the result of this? Where does it start? Schools like Rough Rock give Indian people the real foundation for what they need. If you are really interested in the progress that your tribe should make, your community should make, your immediate family should make, then you, yourselves, have to be involved in their progress. If you're not interested in this and let somebody else do it, then what comes about?

It has been a hundred years since the Bureau of Indian Affairs started running school for Navahos. We could say, let the Bureau do the job. But since the Navaho has taken over a new way of life, it has really started a new era and that era has started with our control of our education. The influence that the Rough Rock Demonstration School has had on the American education is tremendous. There are many areas in New York, New Mexico, and in many other areas where there is a trend toward decentralization. Rough Rock has certainly set a pattern in this area. We are seeing the change taking place in our area. Many Indians are assuming very important posts in state and federal government and in private industry. We have a Navaho who is working with the Apollo program and on his PhD. His area of work is nuclear physics.

We must not say to ourselves that we cannot contribute because we are not worthwhile. We are! We have contributed before and we will continue to do so. We can't say that we haven't done it before, because we have.

I want to give you one more example of what people can do for themselves -- if they really want to. A small Navaho community in New Mexico was very poor in many ways. But they had a spark which brought them together to discuss how they can develop their community. They asked themselves what was wrong about their community and what did they have to make any program for success. So in the first place, they needed jobs for food. Also, there were too many people living in one hogan. A hogan is about 18 feet across, with one door, no windows. In some cases three families live in one hogan.

This community set their sites on building houses out of adobe which they could make right there. They started this. They built over 150 houses from three rooms to five rooms and many of them were done beautifully. The first few houses were not too good but soon they gained experience and confidence. They started doing it a little better. They learned a few more tricks to building a better house. Now those people are the best adobe layers in the world. They are asked to come to build in various other areas. It is such ideas that a group of people can put into practice if you really want to be successful.

If no one had the courage to go the Rough Rock route, then maybe we would not have had the five Navaho people heading their own schools today. Maybe we wouldn't have the trend that is taking place in education in the States today. It has been a real prime mover in giving confidence and pride to Indian people. I think this kind of experience isn't only exclusive to Indian people but applies to other cultures as well.

What is the Navaho Community College? Here again the Navaho took a long step to create their own school of higher learning. They said that too many people, too many kids were dropping out of college. Ninty per cent of our kids that go to college drop out before they graduate. Only less than ten per cent finally get their degree. This was important to the Navaho. How can we do something about it? They say that the

Navaho comes off the reservation, goes to a big university and he's lost because he cannot adjust. So this was the real big factor. It was thought that if we had a community college and if they spent two years to get basic subjects, a few of the subjects in the area of their interests, then the remaining two years should not be that difficult. Now we have 300 at the Navaho Community College. The Navaho people are saying that we can do these things to help our children get the type of education that they should have and want. It is the desire . . . it is the interest . . . it is the dedication that you put into a school that counts. If you know what are the needs of your people, you can create the best possible education program for the children. It is not impossible for Indian people to create an educational system to satisfy their own needs. Rough Rock Demonstration School, the Navaho Community College and our other programs are living examples of what Indian people can do for themselves. You can accomplish the same for yourselves and your people.

* * *

Question:

How many of your children stay in school?

Answer:

I think we have a pretty good average, pretty close to 96%. Now the very few who drop out are those that may get married early as far as high school kids are concerned. Those who have difficulties at home maybe drop out for a year because of death in the family or something like that. But in the lower grades, the elementary, it's almost 98%, which is real good. So that there is a much better outlook on education as far as Navaho people.

Question:

When you first brought the subject of a Navaho-run school, how did the people take to it at first? What did they think about it?

Answer:

Well, they said they didn't know anything about schools. They asked how can they run a school? But I think we assured them that they would be getting guidance from our professional staff to eventually develop to where they are today.

And a good question concerning bilingual education. Lot of our parents in the Rough Rock community said, "We don't want our kids to be taught in Navaho. They already talk Navaho." But the thing they couldn't understand at first is that we could teach them as well in Navaho that we can in English because this is already their language. We assured them that we would spend a great deal of time getting them to understand English so that English could be meaningful as far as communicating is concerned.

Question:

Does the Bureau of Indian Affairs take part in your school?

Answer:

They don't have anything to do with Rough Rock.

Question:

They don't like it or do they like it a bit?

Answer:

What do they feel about the Rough Rock Demonstration School and this whole philosophy? Well, it's threatening. It's threatening to government people. Many of these have life careers in Civil Service. In a Civil Service situation it is difficult for the people to change a poor or weak system because we have no control over it. The community has nothing to do about it. But in a situation like Rough Rock, the School Board and the people can make whatever changes they feel are important. They can hire and fire any teacher, administrator, or staff person. They are in complete control. This is threatening to the Bureau and the people it employs.

Question:

Did the Bureau try to stop your school or try to discourage you?

Answer:

Let me put it this way -- a new idea which involves Indian control of their own projects in never easy to sell to the Bureau. However, the Bureau is beginning to go in the direction of local control and more involvement on the part of the Indian people. President Johnson said he wanted a number of schools like Rough Rock to increase. But then the Bureau is big and their own politics are pretty difficult to solve. So more progress is going to take more time.

Question:

Where did you get the funds for the school?

Answer:

From foundations, the Office of Economic Opportunity, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and from the state.

Question:

Do you have a written language?

Answer:

In our more recent attempts, we have a Navaho dictionary. We have a basic structure of grammar which is pretty much beginning to be uniform now. Every day we convert new English words into Navaho, like the word "space agency", for example. In this way, our language grows and broadens.

Question:

Whose main idea was it? Who started the idea?

Answer:

It was started by many people, but Doctor Robert Roesell, Jr., was probably the most influencial in this area. His wife is a Navaho. He is Anglo. He has spent over 18 years on the Navaho Reservation teaching and doing community development work. At the Arizona State University, he was head of Indian Education Center. So he's the prime mover of the school.

Question:

Can other Indians come and visit Rough Rock?

Answer:

We've had over 95 different tribes visit Rough Rock. Some come for a couple days. Some stay two weeks. Our more recent visitors have been from Canada.

Question:

Did it take you a long time to get the money you needed in order to get started?

Answer:

In actually very short time because money was available and we needed to use that money pretty fast. Maybe it is good that it happened that way because on a long, drawn-out basis it might have been different.

Question:

Is it difficult to get money now?

Answer:

Well, Rough Rock is pretty well established now. We have a five-year contract with the Bureau of Indian Affairs so all the money they would have used for a school of their own they turned over to us. The facilities we use cost close to 3.5 million dollars. This was turned over to the community. We're now planning on having a high school and other programs.

Question:

How much do you spend each year?

Answer:

We have $900,000 as operating funds for our school each year.

Question:

How do you pay your teachers?

Answer:

Our pay scale for teachers is interesting. Our base salary if $6,400.00. We give them a bonus if they speak Navaho. They get increases on their base salary for the amount of experience teaching

Navahos and their academic achievements. So our teachers to Rough Rock average around $7,200,00.

Question:

Do many of the Navahos go on to college?

Answer:

Yes. We have a Community College and our Navaho people are all over the country pretty much picking their own college and university.

Question:

Is most of your school Navaho?

Answer:

Yes, our school at Rough Rock is over 96% Navaho. Half of our teaching staff is Navaho. Eighty per cent of our top administration is Navaho. Our teachers receive wages which are pretty comparable to the schools near by.

I just want to mention a couple of things. Rough Rock has received a lot of publicity and visitors. Recently we had our eighth grade graduation and we had Senator Ted Kennedy give the graduation address. So when you get an eighth grade graduation and get a personality like Ted Kennedy, it's quite an accomplishment.

Question:

What is the population of the Navahos?

Answer:

125,000. It covers an area of four states: New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, a small part of Colorado. The Navaho reservation is about the size of the state of West Virginia.

Question:

Your curriculum, is it the same as any other school? What sort of subjects are you taking?

Answer:

We have the traditional subjects, Navaho history and culture, and home economics and art. Our programs are quite flexible and our school is not too highly structured.

Question:

How have your students done in school after leaving Rough Rock?

Answer:

Our kids have done very well -- as a matter of fact, exceptionally well. We have a five-year evaluation program, which we have set up so that we retain the master files of these kids at Rough Rock, so whatever school they go to we get back their grades and follow them for a five-year period. But to answer your question directly, our kids haven't had any real problems in other schools.

Question:

How long has the demonstration school been in operation?

Answer:

This is our fourth year.

Question:

What's your enrollment?

Answer:

Enrollment last year, it was around 350. It is going to be pretty close to 500 this year.

Question:

How high do the grades go?

Answer:

Up to Grade 8.

Question:

Do you find your people that go to colleges, do they come back and help your people or do they just go and work some place else?

Answer:

I mentioned earlier that there is a great deal of interest on the part of the young Navaho people coming back and they're interested in their tribe. They want to do something, like in education, politics, or in medicine. Many of our Navaho people are returning back to the reservation.

Question:

You say the Navaho school is experimental. How long are they experimenting?

Answer:

Well, I think any school should be experimenting with at least some area of education at all times. I think if it stays just with one area of education, it may become out-dated.

At Rough Rock we have several experiments. For example, we train medicine men. The people asked for funds to train medicine men. What good is a medicine man? They say for the mental health purposes, Navaho medicine men have been very effective in solving the mental problems of their people.

Question:

Do the majority of your people retain their own religion?

Answer:

Many Navaho people belong to the various churches but also retain Navaho ceremonies for various purposes.

Question:

You say you don't have a graded system. What system do you use?

Answer:

We don't have grades as such. To arrive at what level the student is achieving, I think you can do this through tests, teacher evaluation and other instruments which would determine the level of the student.

Question:

Do you have report grades?

Answer:

Yes, we have a report card but it is put as a horse race: one is way ahead; another one is running neck-and-neck; one is behind. In this way, you get the message across. We have the same arrangement for every subject area.

Question:

Do you teach sign language in your school?

Answer:

No, but the mothers, when they want to discipline kids in the classroom, they kind of give them a mean look and that's the only sign language we use.

Question:

The Hopis, are they any close by?

Answer:

Yes, they live right in the middle of our reservation.

Question:

Is there any relation between the Navahos and the Hopis?

Answer:

Traditionally, of course, there have been land problems and things like that but I think there's an agricultural exchange, too.

Question:

The Hopis are supposed to have their own nation. Do they have their own government? Do they run their own laws?

Answer:

Well, pretty much, just like the Navahos. We have our tribal government. We have our branches just like the federal government. We have our judicial, legislative and our executive branches.

Question:

My uncle was over there to see the Hopis and he was arrested by the Indians themselves.

Answer:

Yes, we have our own police who take care of the reservation. Our tribal council, of course, is our Congress. We have a chairman and the 74-member Navaho Tribal Council. We have local chapter organizations which are part of the tribal government. Rough Rock is a chapter with a president, vice-president and secretary.

Question:

You are an almost independent nation?

Answer:

Pretty much so. The Hopis have pretty much the same kind of government. They have a council and they have representatives from each village. They have their own police organization. So that is pretty much the same.

Question:

Have you signed a treaty with Washington?

Answer:

Yes, several. The last was the treaty of 1868. There were often several battles with the Pueblos, with the Spanish, the ranchers and so forth. They were removed from where Navaho reservation is right now and sent to Fort Sumner about 400 miles away to be put in prison for about four years. After the four years, they came to the treaty table and a treaty of 1868 was signed between the Navaho leaders and General Sherman.

Question:

So they still go by those treaties today?

Answer:

To some extent, yes.

Question:

Now that you're developing new educational materials, can these books and materials be used elsewhere?

Answer:

Oh yes.

Question:

To get back to the school system, when you first started, did you investigate other independent schools to see what sort of systems they had, or did all the ideas come from you?

Answer:

Our School Board visited quite a few schools. They visited mission schools, they visited federal schools, public schools, colleges. They sat in on school board meetings at different places. We've also had a great deal of in-service training for our School Board members.

These people elected from the community represent the community in planning the total school program. It is the kind of school that they want. If you want local control, you are certainly going to have to practice it.

Question:

Do you think the white man has been against Indians having control of what belongs to them?

Answer:

Oh yes, I think there have been various policies which the federal government has instigated over the centuries. The integration policy is one in which they tried to make the American Indian to be like all citizens. It didn't work, so they reverted back to the reservation policy. In many cases, in South Dakota and in Oklahoma, for a couple of examples, people have practically lost their Indian identity and everything that they had, including their land.

Question:

Do you have white kids who go to your school?

Answer:

Yes.

Question:

Just to visit or to stay?

Answer:

Half of our teaching staff is non-Navaho and their kids go to school right there.

Question:

How do they like it?

Answer:

I think they enjoy it.

Question:

Do they learn Navaho?

Answer:

Yes, they learn Navaho because it's a part of the school curriculum.

Question:

What do the Indian kids say about the white kids going to their school?

Answer:

Oh, nothing. They like it.

Question:

Are you going to keep those non-Navaho teachers on or are you going to train Navahos to take their places?

Answer:

Well, I don't think we'll have in the near future a completely Navaho staff. I don't think that Rough Rock will be ever complete Navaho and I think that this is one of our objectives. I've said many times that we teach both Navaho and the white man's way of life. This gives the students the tools they need to make their own decisions about life.

Question:

Do you see any danger that there might be any friction between the teacher's aid and the regular teachers especially if the teacher's aid happens to be very good at her job even though not qualified? Does the other one feel threatened because of this?

Answer:

We are trying to promote Navaho people who have the ability and the desire to become teachers. Teacher aids like our program and it gives them an opportunity to gain experience in a classroom. Then we also give them an opportunity to continue their education. They can get their high school diploma if they don't have one, working at the school. We have adult education for our staff and we're encouraging many of our teacher aids to go on and become teachers. This summer we sent them to Navaho Community College to take subjects like American education and psychology. These courses give them more background and up-grade their skills. Our teachers understand what we are trying to do. Half of our teaching staff is Navaho. They and their aids work very closely together. These teachers take advantage of work shops, new techniques and methods they might use for the purpose of upgrading their skills. Eventually we hope that they will become full-time teachers. It may be a threat in one way but I don't really think so. The professional teachers seem quite happy about it.

Question:

Did you have a hard time to bring teachers to come to your school?

Answer:

No, I think any time you have a school which is of an experimental nature, having promise and being quite different and new, then you are going to attract good educators, good teachers.

Question:

Do they come from far away or are they just from surrounding districts?

Answer:

Our teaching staff at Rough Rock comes from such places as the University of California, Harvard, Yale, Arizona, England. It's quite a combination of talent. Again, half of our teaching staff is Navaho. They all are very well qualified.

Question:

In your qualifications are you insisting that they have their certificate come from a school outside the reserve?

Answer:

We have one that's not a college graduate, who's been one of our best teachers.

Question:

Can you tell us some more about your medicine man program?

Answer:

The Navaho Mental Health Program, this is the professional name. We just received a three-year grant from the National Institute of Mental Health, Washington, U.S. Public Health, to train medicine men. We have a project director for this program in which the project director is not a formally educated man. But he is highly intelligent and is very knowledgeable about the school, about the mental health program and relationship between the mental health program and that of mental health of the kids. Right now we have a situation in boarding schools throughout the state, where kids are taken away from their families. They stay in school about nine months out of the year. Then they go home for two and a half months. They're taking kids away from their families for great lengths of time. This creates a situation which the mental health of the kid is in danger. It is felt that the medicine man could be of some help in the counseling of children. The program was important enough for the U.S. Public Health to fund $158,000.

* * *

Wayne Newell is not here so he asked me to express our thanks to Dillon for coming on his visit and on behalf of us all I do want to thank you for making this long trip . . .

After Mr. Platero finished answering questions, Jesse Simon (Micmac) proposed a resolution:

> "Our culture, history, language and pride are in jeopardy with our present high school system. Since nobody has tried to stop this sort of going on, we, the Indian students, have decided to take the first step to revive our history, language and culture which have been rejected by the white society."
>
> "We fully support an Indian-controlled, Indian-directed educational program. We have watched, too long, our people who have attended public, government and church schools. A few of the students have graduated; most have dropped away, disillusioned, dis-spirited and unable to make their way in the non-Indian world, and often are of no value to their own people."
>
> "We are determined to operate a program which will enable our people to hold their own with pride and dignity everywhere, and to be valuable members of their own community."
>
> "We intend this school to be different from existing schools. We intend this school to be unique. We will use new ideas, new methods, and new information. We still have much to do in our planning. We want to talk and visit with different people and think about what is best. But we say now that this is what we want and this is what we will do."

The draft was discussed briefly, and was then adopted unanimously. Then a motion was made that the Union of New Brunswick Indians open an account to handle all donations for the Indian Independent School; this also passed unanimously, and donations totaling $200 from the Shubenacadie Tribal Council and from a woman in Bas Harbor, Maine were turned over to the Union secretary.

APPENDIX

Summary of Student Questionnaires

"Some Concerns", by James Gillis

Summary of Thirty Student Questionnaires
Returned Before the Start of
the Indian Independent School Conference
(July 14 - 18, 1969)

"The purpose of this questionnaire is twofold: First to prepare the delegates from your reserve for the conference. We hope you will be able to hold a youth meeting on your reserve at which the young people can discuss these questions, and write down some ideas. Second, to help us plan the conference. Please send the answers you get to these questions to the Union office by July 10, so we will have time to evaluate them.

"We think that an Indian Independent School can be built. If it is going to be successful, Indian young people will have to plan it. You probably have been asked before, what is wrong with the school you are going to now, or the one you used to go to. We are asking, how would you do it better? What should a school for Indians be like? In answering the questions, don't worry about what you think would be 'possible' or 'what the teachers would like'. This should be a school for the students. We want new ideas."
-- (From the questionnaire directions)

Question 1

Right now, going through high school, you have limited time. A lot of Indians like to go rake blueberries and pick potatoes. Should the school year be planned around the harvests and other events important to Indians?

Responses

Yes - 21; No - 5; No response - 1
Other: Yes, with longer hours
October - July
Students shouldn't go to potato picking and blueberry harvest

Question 2

Should the individual be allowed to work at his own speed?

Responses

Yes - 20; No - 6; No response - 3
Other: Grouping should be by ability

Question 3

Should you be able to start school at different times during the year?

Responses

Yes - 7; No - 14; No response - 3
Other: No, too complicated
No, October - July
No, not in summer
No, would cause confusion
No, same for all
No, all start at the same time

Question 4

Should the school be opened to teaching and classes from 9:00 to 5:00 five days a week or should the teachers be available all the time?

Responses

9 to 5, 5 days a week - 13; Teachers available all the time - 9; No response - 2

Other: 9 to 3, same as other high schools
Both
Classes 5 days a week
Open all the time, but not classes all the time
9 to 5 classes, teacher available all the time
9 to 5, teachers available these hours 7 days a week

Question 5

Should there be classes? Or should you study on your own and go to the teacher if you have a question?

Responses

Yes (classes) - 23; Self-study - 2; Both - 1
Other: Study in class, not afterwards
Classes, but 2 days a week for independent study
Self-study, with assignments when needed
Work at own speed with teacher's help

Question 6

Should your language be taught in the school?

Responses

Yes - 19; No - 5
Other: Yes, with white teachers for English
No, too many of them
Perhaps as an extra subject
Yes, other languages as well
Yes, Indian and English both
Indian languages should be used, not taught

Question 7

Should there be Indian teachers? Should all the teachers be Indians?

Responses

Some Indian teachers, not all - 17; All Indian teachers - 3; No Indian teachers - 2; No response - 3

Other: All Indian teachers if on reserve
Doesn't matter as long as they have ability to teach
Indian teachers, but don't discriminate
Doesn't matter - 2

Question 8

Should we follow the same school curriculum that we have now? If no, what should the curriculum be like?

Responses

Yes - 19; No - 5; No response - 3

Other: Yes, won't understand change
Yes, but modified for individual student
Yes, but not as closely

Question 9

Should Indian culture be taught?

Responses

Yes - 21; No - 3; No response - 1

Other: Yes, but not stressed
Yes, but outside of school
Yes, could be
Up to the individual
Yes, to those interested

Question 10

Should Indian history be taught?

Responses

Yes - 20; No - 3; No response - 1
Other: Yes, but not stressed
Yes, but outside of school
Up to the individual
Both Indian and White history should be taught - 2
Yes, with a lot of changes in the history books

Question 11

Should the legal status of Indians -- Indian Rights -- be an important subject?

Responses

Yes - 26; Yes, not stressed - 2; Yes, in civics - 1;
Other: Study on your own time

Question 12

If you want to study just one or two subjects at a time, should you be allowed to?

Responses

Yes - 17; No - 6; No response - 1
Other: Depends on what you want to do afterwards
The student should decide, within the school's standards
Yes, dropouts should not have to take all the subjects
No, all subjects are necessary to enter into college
Yes, with a good reason
Should be decided according to the individual

Question 13

Should art, sports and music be stressed?

Responses

Yes - 20; No - 8
Other: Art only
They should be available

Question 14

Should there be industrial, academic, business and commercial lines?

Responses

Yes - 24; No - 4; No response - 1
Other: Yes, though the variety should be limited

Question 15

Should you be able to choose from a lot of different courses?

Responses

Yes - 24; No - 6

Question 16

Should you be able to follow your individual interests and get credit for it?

Responses

Yes - 24; No - 5
Other: Up to the teacher

Question 17

Should teaching be suited to the individual?

Responses

Yes - 15; No - 10; No response - 4
Other: Up to the teacher

Question 18

Should the school be set up so that for each course you pass you get 1 credit, and you can graduate after getting a certain number of credits? This way, if a person failed a course he would not have to repeat a whole grade.

Responses

Yes - 23; No - 3; No response - 4

Question 19

Should there be a report card, or should you be graded just on whether you passed or failed?

Responses

Yes (report card) - 22; Pass-fail system - 3;
No response - 2
Other: Report card in certain subjects
Measure achievements based on accomplishments only
Have measure of achievements on yearly basis only

Question 20

Should the students be able to make the rules? Should the students be in charge of discipline?

Responses

Yes - 10; No - 8; No response - 2

Other: Students and teachers together - 3
Yes, some of the rules - 2
A disciplinary committee run by students
No, students should be in charge of certain disciplines only
No, the school board should
No, the principal and the teacher should be in charge
The school should make the rules

Question 21

What age group should be accepted at this school?

Responses

Any age, not important - 4; No responses - 4
Other: 16 or over - 6;
15 to 24; 12 to 17; 14 to 19; 13 to 21;
15 to 21; 15 to 20 - 2; 14 to 20;
Grades 7 to 12; Grade 9 - 2; About to 17;
Depends on ability
Grades more important
Age of admission should be decided by disciplinary council

Question 22

Should the parents take part in the school? How?

Responses

Yes - 11; No - 9; No response - 2
Other: Yes, if interested
Yes, by teaching Indian culture and language
Yes, in meetings
No, just the school board and teachers
Yes, on mechanical things
Yes, to some extent (PTA, etc.)
Yes, the parents' interest would spark greater student interest
Yes, by taking a part in the activities of the school

Question 23

What grade should you have completed before you can go to this school?

Responses

Grade 6, or above - 7; Grade 7 - 4; Grade 8 - 5; Grade 9 - 6; 15 years or older; Grammar school and Jr. High; Not important; Depends on ability; Depends on future course of study of a particular student; No response - 3.

Question 24

Should adult education be a part of the school's program?

Responses

Yes - 14; No - 9; No response - 5
Other: Yes, maybe, in night school
Yes, night school

Question 25

How much free study should there be?

Responses

One to three hours a day - 13
Study periods after each class - 2
4 to 5 study periods a week and study classes nights and Saturday
At least 5 hours a week
As much as you want, or need - 3
At least 2 study periods a week
1 study period a day, in the morning
Not important, can't be forced
Evenings, weekends and five-minute breaks
None
½ to 2½ hours each night

Almost all free study
Decision should be up to students and teachers
No response - 2

Question 26

What sort of buildings should be at the school? How should the classrooms be set up? Should the teacher be up in front of the class?

Responses

Many different buildings. Plenty of light, positive coloring, sense of freedom in the classrooms. Built to accommodate the student, like any other high school. At least 2 buildings and a cafeteria. A regular 2-story house, 1 class for each subject, teacher in front of the class.

Like a normal high school, with windows, teacher in front. A regular high school set-up. Not important. Same as now. An auditorium, the same as other schools. A long table with chairs around it; the teacher should walk around the table. Gym, recreation and study buildings, classrooms divided into grades, teachers up front.

Campus type, semicircular seating. Campus with canteen, the teacher in the middle of the room. Regular facilities, semicircular seating. The teacher in the front. Separate rooms. Modern facilities, the teacher in front of the class. Good facilities, the teacher in front. Same as the white schools. Buildings similar to white schools, teacher in the center of the class. Normal school, regular rooms, teacher in the rear of the room. Very separate, large buildings, teacher at the rear. Teacher in the middle of a circle.

Styled in Indian influence with circular classrooms, teacher not in front because of fear of dominance because of age. Close to nature, sound-proof buildings with all the luxuries, teacher should not be in the same room. No response - 4.

Question 27

Are you in favor of having an all-Indian high school?

Responses

Yes - 23; No - 4; No response - 2
Other: Not important

Question 28

Would you go to such a school?

Responses

Yes - 24; No - 2; No response - 2
Other: Wait and see
Yes, but Indians have to learn to get along with non-Indians

Question 29

Where would you like the school located?

Responses

In a central location - 7;
In the United States - 3;
Anyplace but a city;
Doesn't matter - 2;
New Brunswick - 10;
On a reserve - 2;
Away from home;
No response - 3

Question 30

Who would sit on the board of directors: students, parents, chiefs, councilors, tribal members? How would they be selected?

Responses

Students - 8; Chiefs and students - 2; Chiefs - 3; Chiefs and councils - 1; Councillors - 3; Chiefs and parents - 1; Parents and students - 1; Tribal members - 3; Parents - 1; Senior students should sit on the board and be elected by vote; All - 2; No response - 4

Question 31

Should trades be taught like forestry, high steel work, surveying, game wardens?

Responses

Yes - 20; No - 4; No response - 2
Other: Some
Not definitely
Everything but game wardens
Yes, and surveying

Question 32

Should the students be able to evaluate the teachers?

Responses

Yes - 14; No - 9; No response - 4
Other: No, school board chooses teachers on merit
No, students haven't the right
Yes, through the vote

SOME CONCERNS

by James Gillis

In beginning a new organization, a great many problems must be confronted. Unfortunately, good ideas are of little value unless a way can be found to make them into reality. Therefore, it is not enough (though it is a necessary prerequisite) to only be excited by good ideas. The true visionary is one who recognizes an exciting idea and does something constructive to make it come into being.

In order to start a new school, the founders must eventually concern themselves with some of the following points, and probably many not listed here. The order of concerns is not important, as any set of activities will vary dependent upon the people involved and events that occur on an unpredicted basis. The most beautifully conceived plans will change to some degree as they are tested by reality. This being true, the opportunity for intelligent change should be consciously built into the initial plans.

Let us consider a hypothetical situation -- one which may or may not turn out to be true. Let us assume that we wish to organize and begin a new school for North American Indian youth, perhaps ages 14 to 20, primarily from the Maritime Provinces of Canada and the Northeastern section of the United States. Let us further assume that one of the many reasons we wish to start this school is that many thousands of Indian youngsters are not receiving a sufficient education from existing schools.

First, some one must define why you need a school. What is there about existing schools that make people unhappy? Can you support your concern of the present with facts and figures?

Second, a plan, or series of alternate plans, needs to be devised that takes the previous facts and figures into account. It is easier to identify problems than it is to create solutions. There is serious question to the value of recreating a bad situation. The new "solution" should be constructive and eliminate most or all of the problems that called for a move away from the old pattern in the first place.

Since we will assume there is sufficient data available regarding the first point (how schools are presently failing the Indian children) let us look at some areas to be considered under the second area, planning the new school.

If you would start a "formal" school to replace existing ones, general areas for consideration might be:

Sources of funds

Affiliation with other organizations (Federal, local, private, college, etc.)

Student population

10-year plan (regarding size, growth, potential, facilities, expansion, etc.)

Residential or commuter

Curriculum (course content, trade skills, college orientation)

Instructional technology

Directors (who, how constituted, replacement, students, teachers, parents, etc.)

Physical facilities

Professional personnel

Management

One campus or decentralized

Elapsed time vs. learning

Philosophy and Objectives

Evaluation

The above broad headings are like icebergs -- nine-tenths of the meaning is below the surface. Educators in most parts of the world are attempting to find answer to these problems. They are not easy to solve, or they would have been, and no group working on them is culture-free. Every group has its own unique cultural baggage to contend with, as well as some aspects of other cultures, so that they are always compounded by value judgments.

There are finite time constraints within which to educate young people. The value systems which predominate in the adult population will determine in large measure what will be learned, by whom and under what conditions. Each cultural group or sub-group will modify how formal education is administered in its jurisdiction. For example -- does one teach two languages, or three, or four, or five -- and which ones? Is the orientation towards college, vocational skills, or general citizenship, or some combination? What learning materials, books, films, tapes, etc., will be used?

Formal schools were originally established because parents could no longer teach young people all they needed to know to be successful in the world. The boys used to apprentice with their father or uncle, the girls with mother or aunt. Because of increasing complexity and opportunity, new demands are constantly placed upon teachers. Even as the parent cannot offer the entire range of learning opportunity, so the school has fallen heir to a similar problem. No school can expect to be all things to all students. Therefore, very tough and very real decisions must be made about any school including a new one. Although experts and advisers can be used for guidance and help, the final decisions are those of the parents.

POST-CONFERENCE EVALUATION SHEET

1. Write three things that you have learned from this conference about what it means to be an Indian.

To be Proud-

- To be proud that we are Indians and have pride in our ancestors.
- Being here gives me a fierce amount of pride to be an Indian and if anyone tries to get us down they will have a very hard time.
- I have learned to be more proud of our Indian culture which I have learned a lot of new things about.
- The first and I guess the most important thing that I have learned is to be proud of my heritage. We have a lot of history and culture going for us.
- To be an Indian means that you have a lot to be proud of; maybe more than the white man.
- To have pride in all our contributions to the world.
- To have pride in one's self.
- We can be proud of what we are, without the need of apology.
- To be an Indian means everything in the world to me.

To be Equal-

- Our ways and the way of the white people are somewhat different...we should follow ours and they follow theirs with nobody interrupting anybody else's business.
- We have as much capability and knowledge as the white people.
- An Indian is just as able as anybody else to become or do what he wants to be or do.

But not Equal-

- Being an Indian I only now realize how unfortunate it is for me not to speak my own language or not to know anything about my own history or the general culture of my people.
- To be discouraged and scattered.
- To be poor and uneducated and unskilled in work.
- The Indian needs more education to cope with this complicated world.
- Being an Indian needs to be set apart from everyone else in this world; if I would I would try to ease the Indian in with non-Indian society so we could all live as one.
- I have gone to other Indian schools out west and have seen harmony and unity among themselves - to be equal to whites they have proven it too but I have not seen northeastern Indians unite, go in harmony or really try doing things of equal value to whites; they have pulled themselves down to where it is impossible to identify their values. Now at this conference they are proving different and all we need is just a thread to pull us out.

To face Prejudice-

- As Indians we should stand up and speak out to all false impressions about Indians that exist in our country today.
- We know what it is to be lied about in history books, discriminated against, to have your culture gradually done away with, and to be always looked at as bad.
- If you take on the trappings of another culture you might be ostracized by your own culture.
- Don't let others put you down.

To be Cooperative-

- Indians stick together; if one Indian has problems the other Indians will try to help him out.

and Generous-

- to be a people with big hearts, whose kindness backfired.

2. **Write three things you have learned from this conference about the planning of a new school.**

(Most answers centered around the revelation that a school planned by and for Indians was possible - that students might impose their own rules, that teachers could be evaluated by students, etc. How to bring these things about would take greater confidence in the objective and greater confidence of the students in their own abilities.)

We can-

- build without Whites taking a stand.
- build a school that doesn't have any connection with the Canadian Indian Act, or with the government.
- Planning an all-Indian school is the first step in preserving our cultures, and to give us a better stand in this world. Having an all-Indian school is what we want and I think that having a school is the best thing that could ever happen to Indians.

If-

- It needs careful consideration and the cooperation of **each and every** individual involved.
- We must give our ideas.
- We must be willing to carry out the ideas of the majority.
- It takes determination, careful planning and hard work.
- We must tell others about our new school.
- you take a positive attitude toward this new school you can make great gains towards the planning and achieving of this school.

We need-

- to do more research on other independent schools; such as how they were organized and the problems faced at their birth.
- Money has to be raised in order that such a school can be built.
- Planning a new school, especially an all-Indian school, takes a lot of time, money and cooperation from a lot of people.
- Get all the attention you can to focus upon this plan so that support, whether financial or moral, can be attained.
- If this plan sounds good to all other people this school may be built quicker and better for the benefit of the Indians.

Rules and Regulations-

- We have to consider what kind of rules should be made and by whom; what subjects to be offered; and how students should behave.
- You must have a certain system of learning, good management, and certain objectives they must fulfill.

3. **What three things would you suggest be done if you were planning another Indian conference for young people?**

Beforehand-

- I would make plans with the planning committee and then contact the Reserves in about a couple of weeks before the date of the conference.
- We should be told enough in advance so that we could hold a meeting prior to it on our own Reserves among our parents, chiefs and students to discuss what we want.
- Send out with the invitations a list of rules regarding discipline covering the conference and stress too this note: 'Don't come if you are coming for the ride. Come only if you want to benefit the conference.'
- You should give full information on what the meeting is going to be about.
- Have everything planned before the people come.
- A schedule must be made out before the conference.

Attendance-

- Let the young people do the choosing on who is the one to attend the conference because they should know who is going to speak out and who isn't.
- Have more than two students from each Reservation attend.
- Students and dropouts attending the conference should be a certain age.
- Pick young, mature people, 16 and over.
- I would try to get important people down to talk to the students just like we have here.
- The students from each Reservation should pick one teacher from their previous school to attend this conference.
- Have one conference in a camping atmosphere (in sleeping bags in the woods, etc.).

During-

- Let the young people have their way for the first two days, then introduce speakers one at a time, then let the young people ask these persons questions.
- Set up the conference room so the speakers would be surrounded by people who would ask them questions.
- Have a professor (speaker) discuss his viewpoint and later let the student ask him questions.
- Direct questions to students so that they will speak out.
- We should have students in the front and adults in the back during the meeting.
- Have everyone meet in the conference room and break these people up into several groups. I feel we can accomplish more like this - some are not used to talking in large groups.
- Include in each (group) some with training, some not afraid to speak out, and people from different tribes.
- Have a curfew; separate the boys from the girls.

Subjects-

- We should talk more about the Indian Act and treaties because it is important for us to know where we stand.
- More discussion on Indian history - we should have a book on Indian history written by an Indian.
- More emphasis on Indian culture, such as dancing, etc.
- Have films of speeches.
- Recreation: Indian dances, record hops, Indian games, parties.
- Talk about smoking, alcohol, drugs; mixed religion and marriage, language, the future.

Participation-

- Insist on more participation of students.
- Stress the importance of attending each meeting.
- Keep the freedom we had at this conference, where everyone was trusted.

Write three things you have learned from this conference about teachers.

(The majority of viewpoints expressed by these answers were arrived at before the conference - in the classroom! No attempt was made to disparage the teachers in the eyes of the students but the students were encouraged to express any frustrations they might have experienced in the classrooms, in an effort to pave the way towards better student-teacher relationships. Interestingly, most of the answers took the form of suggestions. Students care!)

Gripes-

- Some teachers are prejudiced, afraid of giving their opinion, afraid of being open. Teachers act too superior, are boring, take sides, have favorites.

- Teachers for the most part are not teachers, they are simply paid guards.

- Many of them don't care how they teach us as long as they get paid.

- Too many of them don't have enough patience or interest in their pupils' work; many students fail because of this.

- I learned that not only in the school where I go do teachers look down on Indian students.

- They make us feel low.

- Teachers stick too much to the present school system; they try to learn us the same things they learned others 50 years before.

- They do not (always) express themselves or their opinions outwardly but just stick to facts. A person, or persons, can't just stick to facts alone because each person has a different mind and they draw different conclusions from each piece of material that they learn.

Suggestions to teachers-

- There can be good teaching if the foundations of what is to be taught are explained.

- They should help the students individually and encourage them.

- They should be equal.

- They should help students outside of school as well as in school either with homework or a different problem.

- They should be available at all times for the student to get extra help.

- Teachers should help you forget your past experiences in a different school and help you make a new road.

- The teacher should not act like your parent or think he or she is better than you because you are an Indian.

- A teacher should be neutral towards race while he or she is teaching students.

- No matter where the teacher is from, or of what nationality, it is his duty to help the Indian students better themselves and not be in the lower classes.

Suggestions to students-

- Not all teachers are alike. If you respect your teacher your teacher will respect you.

- Teachers also have to be classed as human beings and not just things standing in the front of the class giving us knowledge.

- Teachers can give you help if only you ask for it.

- A teacher would respect a student if the student respected himself.

- You must have self-respect and respect for your teachers; if you don't then you won't try to learn anything.

Observations-

- Some teachers can be very helpful. Not all teachers are the same.

- Some teachers are O.K. just as long as you listen and obey.

- I learned that teachers that teach the same subject may have different points of view and teaching methods.

- A teacher is not really a superior, but an equal.

- As far as I'm concerned they don't know a lot about our history.

- On evaluating the teachers: Yes, I agree, but to a certain extent. Teachers should be equal to students and in that way both the teacher and the student will find out more about themselves.

5. **If you were in charge of planning a new school for your own Reserve, what kinds of people would you ask to help you in the planning?**

- First, I would get a person who knows and cares if the Indians learn about their own language and culture - a person from Indian Affairs to get the government to finance this school but to keep the Indian Affairs and the government out of this school - the Union of New Brunswick Indians - Indian and white teachers - someone who knows the present school system and would like to try and create a new one for the Indians to help the Indians learn more accurately.

- I wouldn't consider one nationality better than another. There are some good people in every walk of life - should ask for help but only the good will help and the ones who understand our situation and our need for an all Indian school.

- People who have past experience in planning similar schoo
- Ideas from the people involved.
- The chiefs, students and parents of our Reserve.
- Most likely, they would be Indian - well-educated people.
- Architects who are Indian.
- People who had problems while they were going to school.
- People who know a lot about Indians and their culture.
- Some one who could provide me with financial backing.
- Influential citizens from the area to promote the new school.
- An organizer who would know just how to go about it to start the ball rolling.

6. **What did you come to the conference for? What did you expect to get out of it? What did you get out of this conference? Did you think the conference was valuble or a waste of time? Write anything about the conference that you want to.**

What did you come to this conference for?-

- I was chosen to represent our Reserve in planning an Indian school and to give my opinions.

- to be involved and express my ideas about an Indian school.
- to see what I could get out of this conference, to talk and see if we could get an all Indian school
- to help get a school badly needed for Indians.
- I didn't want to see an Indian school built.
- I came to get to know more about this new school.
- because I was interested in the idea of an all Indian independent school.
- because I want to help my people.
- because I wanted to be a part of this important step.
- to meet other people with common interests; to meet Indians from different Reserves.
- to learn more about our Indians and others and to gain something from what they had to say.

What did you expect to get out of it?-

- I expected to get an idea how the school should be worked out and how and who should run it.
- I expected to be able to go home and tell my people what this Indian school is going to be like.
- more awareness of Indian problems and how this high school would benefit us.
- I expected to get a general outline or model of the building.
- I expected to learn a few things I never knew before, which I did.
- I expected to learn more about my Indian identity, culture, history and language.
- a sense of accomplishment.
- I really didn't know what it was about so I didn't expect to get too much out of it.

What did you get out of this conference?-

- I learned that you can be real proud of being an Indian.
- I had a great opportunity to meet Indian students and adults from other Reserves.
- I learned that Indian youths have or could have the ability to do something for themselves and succeed.
- I got quite a bit out of this conference; more knowledge about Indians.
- Information that we should have known long before this month.
- More courage to face this mad, mad world of ignorant people.
- I got a very good feeling, like the whole world was behind us.

(The following are adult responses to the same questions asked the students.)

1. (What it means to be an Indian)

It means that to be an Indian you are accepted without question. It means that to be an Indian, one has or obtains from the group that spirit or feeling of communication that exists among Indian people - Christian people might call it "brotherly love." This type of communication needs few words, but a lot of thought. It means that to be an Indian there should be no fear, and if there is fear than we must agree that it was learned and should be unlearned.

An Indian has a responsibility to share his Indian-ness with other Indians. The young people are as worried about culture as the older people.

I have learned that we should be proud and keep up our culture, language, etc.

...that Indians have problems and they are the same in the U.S. as in Canada; the problems come from White regulations; the problems can be solved by Indians.

2. (About planning of a new school)

It is difficult and challenging to think of a new concept. Perhaps we should be calling upon our ancestors to give us insight and inspiration and an awareness of what used to be good and what used to work for them. Young people have the creativity to do good if given the chance. We must all work together, White and Indian, and we must realize that it will take time so that we do not become discouraged and impatient.

People are the difficulty. Preconceived ideas about education, based on the kind of schooling forced on people in the past, is hard to overcome. It's hard to think freely. Most of us don't realize when we are not thinking freely.

There is a need for an all Indian school. There is an interest in the students. The school should start out as all Indian.

We should start with the students themselves in cooperation with the planning board. The planning board should have more students on it. More work should be done on where the school would be and where money is going to be coming from. And, it should be planned by Indians.

3. (Planning another Indian conference for young people)

Have students plan the conference. Plan it a year ahead; Indian people should be notified way ahead of time.

The agenda should be prepared ahead or time and sent to each Reserve, such as to the chiefs.

Perhaps a self-appointed planning committee should be formed to write or print and distribute literature on possible alternatives. Have the conference on a Reserve or many conferences on many Reserves

Make financial arrangements ahead or time.

Encourage small groups. There existed a retreat within the groups at first, but after the initial shyness was overcome, the group progressed and nearly everyone participated. In a larger

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group you get lost and may not say what you feel for a day.

Each group be given a challenge and that it should be separate and distinct from the others.

More Indian dancing and story telling should be included. Refreshments should be given in the evening. We should have more discipline in the sleeping quarters.

. (About teachers)

Teachers should be Indian, both male and female. We should ave two to each subject. Teachers should not be too strict or how favoritism.

Teachers have not changed in their selfish desire to rob us f our free expression, free will and thinking, and make us into obots.

Teachers have cruel methods of discipline - the true teacher s one who listens and answers questions.

. (What kinds of people would you ask to help you in planning)

There are advantages in asking all people, whether they are or or against such a school. I would not leave anyone out, and ould ask the old as well as the children.

Students, drop-outs, teachers, persons from different Reserves, ribal leaders, free school directors, experienced school directors nd foundation people.

Parents who would send their children. Students who would ttend. Traditional leaders. A few very innovative educators. nterested community members.

. (The conference as a whole)

I came to the conference because I am interested in education or Indian young people. I expected to meet and listen to the oung Indians talk about themselves. I received a lot of impresions from the young people that saddened me in some respects, yet feel that they have overcome a lot in their education since the dds are against them. The conference was extremely valuable in etting each know that they are not alone in fighting for an Indian ducation.

Got verbal invitation about "conference on Indian education." pected seminars including mostly professional educators and ouncillors. This is much better; more basic than I expected. ould like to see community reactions to the all Indian idea. There a lot of distance to go before we see results.

"Student-planned" is a non-Indian concept that will alienate e school from Indian communities and will cause the students be disfunctional as community members....to discuss schooling is to rrow the field. Indians have had education of the worst sort oved at them as the key to the World's Treasures. Had the nference dealt with "What kinds of experiences and facilities ould our young people have," it might have been more innovative and ee-thinking. Don't let the dream die. Don't attempt to compete th White schools - it's a losing game.

- I got nothing out of this conference except a few friends.

- I learned a lot more than I ever expected.

- I found out almost all the information I needed and even more to explain to the people on the Reserve what this is all about.

- Satisfaction in knowing I may have helped.

Did you think the conference was valuable, or a waste of time?

- I think this conference was valuable in its desire to get ideas from students.
- I think this conference was valuable because we (the students) had to get together to find out our different opinions.
- It proved to be very interesting and not a waste of time.
- It gave each person a chance to think about things that they might not have considered before.
- This conference was real valuable if we knew what was going on all the time.
- At times this conference was quite valuable (when the people were serious about talking about the school.)
- I think this conference was quite valuable because the majority of Indian students have learned a great deal about Indian rights, history and teachers.
- I definitely believe it was valuable because here was a chance for me and others to solve our personal problems and also help drop-outs of this present time and also future drop-outs. Also, if this school is set up we the Indian students could learn about our culture, history and language.
- If there is a slight chance of this school getting started, it was valuable.
- This conference was very important to me and I know it was to others also.
- I think now that the whole thing was a waste of time because I really haven't seen any plans made. Maybe the only definite plan is that there will be an all Indian school.

Write anything about the conference you want to.

- I want the Indian school.
- I hope we get our school.
- I would like to see this school built in the near future.
- I liked all of the resource people.
- I don't have much to say except this is the best thing anyone could have done for us. And we should have more of these meetings in the future.
- Many other students should attend.